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WILD ANIMAL
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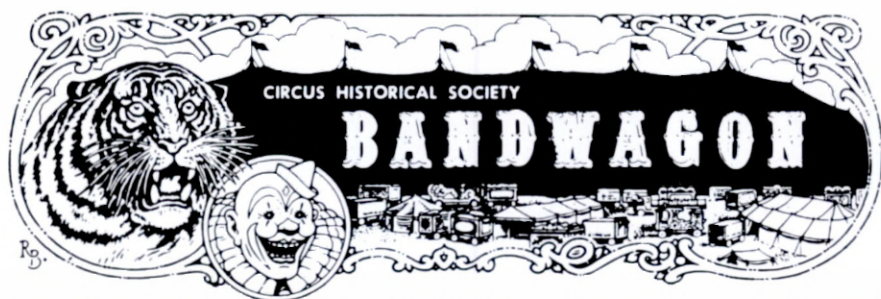
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IN A CLASS BY ITSELF

MAY-JUNE 1980



THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY Vol. 24, No. 3

May-June 1980

Fred D. Pfening, Jr. Editor

Joseph T. Bradbury and Fred D. Pfening III, Associate Editors

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

The illustration on the cover of this issue was used as the front cover of a courier booklet by the A.I. G. Barnes Circus around 1915.

It is lithographed in full color with the title in yellow on red, and circus in green. This design was used by the Barnes show for a number of years, with changes in the full color center spread. A \$10,000 pneumatic air pipe calliope was listed as a parade feature on the back cover. The original is the same size as reproduced, and was printed at the U.S. Litho Co. Pfening collection.

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So if you have not as yet sent your payment please do so at once so you will not miss a single issue.

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THE NEW COLE Bros. CIRCUS

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Season of 1949 By Joseph T. Bradbury

It was now 1949 and a new era for Cole Bros. had begun. Jack Tavlin and his associates had purchased the 30 car show from Zack Terrell a few weeks earlier and it was in quarters at the fairgrounds in Louisville, Ky. which had been the Cole winter home since the conclusion of the 1940 season.

The so called "associates" of Tavlin were Frank O'Donnell, president of the Peter Briedt Brewing Co. of Elizabeth, N.J.; Eddie McEuen of Saratoga Springs, N.Y., and Roy A. McAndrews of Chicago. According to a report in the *Billboard* each of four owned 25 percent of the stock in the new company. Jesse H. Murden, prominent in Indiana business and governmental circles, who had helped in the original organization of Cole Bros. back in the winter of 1934-35, was again instrumental in the sale of the show by Zack Terrell to the Tavlin group. The show's equipment was held by the Hoosier Circus Corporation which had been chartered in the State of Indiana by Adkins and Terrell in 1940 to replace earlier bankrupt corporations. It appears the new owners wanted to continue with the Hoosier Circus Corp. which was chartered in Indiana where Murden was quite influential. According to news stories appearing in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* at the time, the new owners purchased the Hoosier Circus Corp. from Terrell and Frank O'Donnell was elected its new president. Details of an operating company, if any, the new owners may have formed are not known to the author. Likewise, it is not known the exact amount of funds each of the new owners may have put up to purchase the show. Tavlin was named as general manager and would travel with the show and handle its day to day operation. McEuen would also be with it part of the time but O'Donnell and McAndrews would make only limited visits during the season. Zack Terrell agreed to serve as an advisor during the winter and early spring as preparations were made to put the "new" Cole Bros. Circus on the road. The word "new" was used dominantly in the show's advertising and publicity and even the letterhead now read—"The New Cole Bros. Circus."

Jack Tavlin was really the only experienced circus man of the group. He had served as director of public relations and handled the printed programs on the Clyde Beatty-Russell



Bros. Circus in 1944 when that show was owned by Art Concello and in 1945 he was in partnership with Concello in the operation of the Russell Bros. Pan Pacific Circus on rails. Prior to 1945 Tavlin had some dealings with

Photo No. 1—General Manager Jack Tavlin (right) and circus artist, George Churchill, at Cole Bros. quarters in Louisville, Ky., early spring of 1949. This photo appeared in the 1949 program. Pfening Collection.



Photo No. 3—America steam calliope bringing up the rear of the presidential inaugural parade in Washington, D.C., Jan. 20, 1949. This photo which went out nationally over the wire services was also used in the show's 1949 program. Pfening Collection.

Ringling-Barnum and at one time had furnished the programs. He was well known in the circus world. According to the late Arnold Maley, Eddie McEuen was one of the financial backers of James Edgar when he operated the 10 car Sparks Circus in 1947 but was not active in the management of the show. Neither of the other two Tavlin associates, Frank O'Donnell or Roy McAndrews had any previous circus experience.

The secular press as well as the trade publications contained numerous accounts of the change of ownership of Cole Bros. and the plans for its future. For example, the Jan. 9, 1949 *Chicago Daily Tribune* had a lengthy article with photos describing the purchase of Cole Bros. by businessmen of New York, Chicago, and Miami (Tavlin's home) and mentioned that the group was headed by Frank O'Donnell. The story also said there were well founded rumors that Cole might be merged with Daily Bros. to form a 35 to 59 car circus although there was no strong evidence such an event would take place. The article advised that the new Cole show planned to compete actively with Ringling-Barnum in 1949 for circus patronage and that it would be

In 1949 two new letterhead designs were printed. This one was printed in red and green on yellow paper. Pfening Collection.

routed into eastern cities, something that had not happened in recent years. (1940)

The Jan. 1, 1949 *Billboard* said that Beverly Kelly had been appointed press chief of Cole Bros. Kelly, well known in the circus world, had served in a similar capacity with Daily Bros. in 1948 and prior to that had put in many seasons with Ringling-Barnum. R. M. Harvey, veteran circus advance man, who had also been with Daily Bros. for several years, was signed by Cole as general agent and Vander Barquette, with Ringling for the last several seasons, was hired to produce the 1949 Cole performance. Other personnel signings by Tavlin included William Oliver as manager of advance car No. 1. Oliver had been with Daily Bros. in 1948 in the same capacity. It was also announced that Noyelles Burkhart had been retained as manager and would continue with Cole during the coming season. Zack Terrell, as earlier announced, was serving in an advisory capacity but would not travel with the show.

A few days later Bobby Hasson was appointed sideshow manager. He had been with Ringling-Barnum for a number of years as assistant to the late Fred Smythe, sideshow boss for the Big Show. Hasson planned to report to Louisville about March 1 but began immediately to line up his personnel and attractions. The following advertisement appeared in the Jan. 6, 1949 *Billboard*.

"WANTED FOR COLE BROS. CIRCUS SIDE SHOW. Outstanding acts of highest calibre. One good freak to feature. Novelty and working acts of all kinds. State all, including salary expected in first letter. Send recent photo, will be returned. Bobby Hasson, 1273 Penn St. N.E. Washington, D.C."

Bev Kelly got going in his new job as chief of Cole Bros. press in a big way by scoring a major publicity triumph for the show. He arranged for the America steam calliope

Photo No. 6—Cole Bros. lithos used at South Bend, Ind., June 27, 1949. The design at right is new and advertises the Zachinnis cannon act. Note the Pepsi Cola advertisement. Pfening Collection.



Photo No. 5—Cole Bros. newly styled midway in 1949. The new folding metal sideshow bannerline is at left and on right are the new concession stand wagons. Pfening Collection.

wagon to appear in Washington, D.C. for the inaugural parade on January 20 for President Harry Truman and Vice President Alban Barkley. The calliope was put into the parade as one of the Kentucky units, the move being a natural since the new vice president Barkley had been a senator from the state for many years. The America wagon was newly painted and decorated and shipped on a special flat car to Washington where it was stored at the Army prior to the parade. The hitch of 8 Percherons which would pull it were housed at the National Zoo. Kelly, who handled all of the details of the calliope's appearance in the parade, was assisted by two other newcomers to the Cole press staff, Allen Lester and Frank Morrissey. The Cole title was prominently displayed on the wagon of which Frank (Dutch) Warner handled the reins of the 8 horse hitch and Kenny Woodward played the instrument in the line of march. Woodward included in his repertoire Missouri Waltz and Meet Me in St. Louis for President Truman and My Old Kentucky Home for Vice President Barkley. Kelly and his staff during the entire inaugural week festivities succeeded in gathering great publicity in both the

newspapers and on radio. The Cole Bros. title was prominent in all copy and national wire services sent out photos of the America steam calliope bringing up the rear of the parade to newspapers throughout the land.

The new Cole show was moving rapidly in lining up its personnel and performance and the Feb. 5, 1949 *Billboard* said that general manager Tavlin announced the signing of several new acts which included Con Colleano, tight wire artist; the Bruno Zacchini double cannon act; Jim Wong Troupe, Chinese acrobats; Donita Konyot and her dancing horse; Ming Sing Troupe, Chinese acrobats; Ivanov Troupe, aerial act, formerly with Polack Bros., and the St. Leon Troupe, acrobatic act. Further details on some of the acts noted that Colleano who had been in England of late had formerly been with Cole Bros. and prior to that with Ringling-Barnum. It was also mentioned that it was the first time the Zachhini cannon act had been with a traveling show since with Ringling-Barnum in the 1930's. Tavlin further announced that winterquarter activity was reaching a peak with 92 persons at work there under direction of Noyelles Burkhart. About the middle of February, Vander Barquette, who will produce the spec and web numbers, was due in Louisville with a lineup of 24 girls

Photo No. 7—Cole Bros. loaded flat cars at South Bend, Ind., June 27, 1949. Pfening Collection.



contracted from Wally Wanger, New York chorus line producer. Barrette was already at work rehearsing the girls in New York.

The Feb. 26, 1949 *Billboard* in another detailed report from the Cole quarters told about some of the new physical equipment being obtained as well as new personnel additions. It was mentioned that the show would have some new wagons, designed and built by the Kentucky Trailer Co. of Louisville; that new lighting is being engineered by Revere Mfg. Co. of Chicago, and new seats being made by the Durham Mfg. Co. of Muncie, Ind. would be constructed so as to simplify their putting up and taking down. Tavlin reported the new train runs being built by the Magnesium Co. of America, a subsidiary of Bates Steel Co., East Chicago, would weigh only 600 lbs. each, enabling four men to handle them. The article went on to say that new acts recently signed are the Tong Bros., Chinese acrobats and contortion; Cimilis, perch pole number, and Italian importation, and the Tumblety brothers, clowns, recently of the Mills Circus in London. Tavlin also said that the private car that had been used by Terrell was being overhauled at the Pullman Shops in Harvey, Ill. at a cost of \$20,000. It will be air conditioned and Mr. and Mrs. Bev Kelly will supervise the interior decorating. Other notes said that general agent, R.M. Harvey, reported that the show will use no tack banners in 1949 and that monies ordinarily put into that will go for expanded newspaper and radio advertisements. Harvey also said that the show would have no candy pitch and possibly there would be no aftershow concert. The advance crew was all set to go with the following: R.M. Harvey, general agent; Bev Kelly, director of press and radio; Frank Morrissey and Floree Galt, stories; Allen Lester, contracting press; William J. Lester and J. R. Harvey, contracting agents; William L. Oliver, manager advertising car No. 1; Tom Gunnels, manager advertising car No. 2; Glenn Booth, opposition brigade agent; and Harry A. Doran, special agent and checker. Noyelles Burkhart said that all quarters work was on schedule.

The same *Billboard* issue also carried a report that the show would purchase a group of Pullman cars from the New York Central Railroad to be used by Cole during the coming season but this report was evidently in error as it appears the same sleepers used the previous season were continued in 1949. The extensive renovation of the private car and the ordinary

Photo No. 8—Cole Bros. loaded flat cars at South Bend, Ind., June 27, 1949. In center is the Zachinni cannon truck. Pfening Collection.

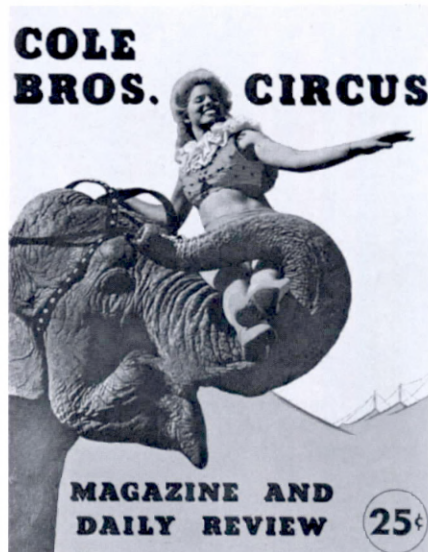


Photo No. 2—Front cover of Cole Bros. 1949 program featured a color photo of Patricia Scott and elephant, Blanche. Background colors were blue at top and yellow at bottom. Lettering was in red with black trim. This was the first new front cover design for a Cole Bros. program since 1941. Pfening Collection.

winterquarter repairs and maintenance of the other cars appear to have been the only changes to take place in the show's sleepers.

The March 5, 1949 *Billboard* in an interesting report from Louisville said that the 1949 Cole performance would have no spec. Tavlin announced the season would open April 14 in Louisville and emphasis would be on "real circus". He said the spec was being eliminated because it is impossible to properly maintain the costumes and props throughout the lengthy season and it ends up as a "trash parade". Tavlin advised the performance would have plenty of color with particular attention paid to lighting and costuming. The show will travel on 30 cars. Final notes in the article said that Tavlin had signed the Mathis bicycle act and confirmed that Henry Kyes would line up the band but that his son, Jaxon Kyes, would serve as leader on the road. C.L. Brown was to be band director. The entire band set-up was somewhat an unusual arrangement from the ordinary circus band situation in those days.

Throughout the early weeks of 1949 it was reported that Tavlin was attempting to line-up a major Hollywood attraction for the show. In February he supposedly made overtures to

Judy Conova and Gene Autry to appear with the show and in mid March the *Billboard* said that its office had learned that Dan Dailey had been contracted to appear with Cole for a week. Dailey, a noted dancer and movie personality, would appear as a tap dancer on a platform atop an elephant. Tavlin could not be reached to verify the report, but in time it was proved to be false as had all previous rumors.

In late March, Jack and Jake Mills, owners of Mills Bros. Circus, visited the Louisville quarters and purchased some wardrobe to be used during the coming season on their own show.

For weeks, almost back to the time of the Tavlin group purchase of Cole Bros., there had been reports, some in the secular press, that the show had plans to establish winterquarters in Florida and the facility would be built into a year round tourist attraction. This story, along with the well circulated rumor that Cole was in search of a major Hollywood attraction both came to fruition in a huge headlined article in the April 2, 1949 *Billboard*, "COLE BROS. BUYS MIAMI W.Q." Former Govt. Layout New Home of Org. SHOW INKS LANCASTER." The article went on to say that the show had purchased from the U.S. Government a layout of 155 acres less than ten miles north of Miami proper. The site is a former shipyard on U.S. No. 1 across from Ojus. The Dade County Zoning Commission okayed the deal. The groups have one large building, 420 x 60 ft. wide x 50 ft. tall with concrete floor and is glassed on four sides. The site has a railroad siding, also a canal 90 ft. wide running 1,000 ft. into the grounds. Tavlin said plans are to make the new winterquarters a year round proposition with zoological and botanical gardens and a children's recreational area. The other major news item said that Burt Lancaster, well known movie actor, had signed for a two to four week tour with the show starting in Louisville at the opening April 14. Lancaster, a former circus performer, will do his old acrobatic act with the same partner he had some years ago. His salary was reported to be \$11,000 which will top by one grand the salary Tom Mix received from Sells-Floto in 1930, however, Louella Parsons, Hollywood nationally known radio personality, wrote that Lancaster's salary was five to six G's a week. Two other acts recently signed by Tavlin are the George Hanneford Family riding act and Rudy Docky's dogs. A deal has been made with Pepsi-Cola to supply exclusive soft drinks for the show. Reportedly the advertising tie-in

Photo No. 9—Unloading Cole Bros. cages at South Bend, Ind., June 27, 1949. Pfening Collection.





Photo No. 11—New sideshow panel bannerline wagons, No. 60 and 61, unloading from Cole Bros. flat cars, season of 1949. Photo by Venice Day.

The new cookhouse wagon and the four concession vehicles were equipped with single pneumatics while the others had dual wheels.

The list of new Kentucky Trailer Co. wagons was as follows:

1. Side show panel—No. 60
2. Side show panel—No. 61
3. Short cookhouse range wagon—No. 23
4. Concession stand
5. Concession stand
6. Concession stand
7. Concession stand
8. Seats, chairs, closed type—No. 85
9. Seats, chairs, closed type—No. 86
10. Seats, planks, slatted sides—No. 92
11. Seats, planks, slatted sides—No. 84

With the addition of these new Kentucky built wagons the former vehicles used to carry these loads became excess and were left in quarters. These were mainly plank and chair wagons. Also not carried on the road in 1949 was No. 64 which had housed the sideshow fighting lion and props. The lion was not to be a feature this season. Since a walkaround spec was not a part of the 1949 performance the two pony type floats, Mother Goose, and Old Woman in Shoe which had been carried the previous year, were also left in quarters.

During the winter of 1948-49 a new No. 21 cookhouse wagon was built but is believed to have been constructed by the show's own shop forces in the quarters. It had steel sides and retained the solid rubber carnival type wheels. The former wagon was left minus wheels in Louisville.

A new unit loaded on the flat cars in 1949

was the Zachinni cannon truck.

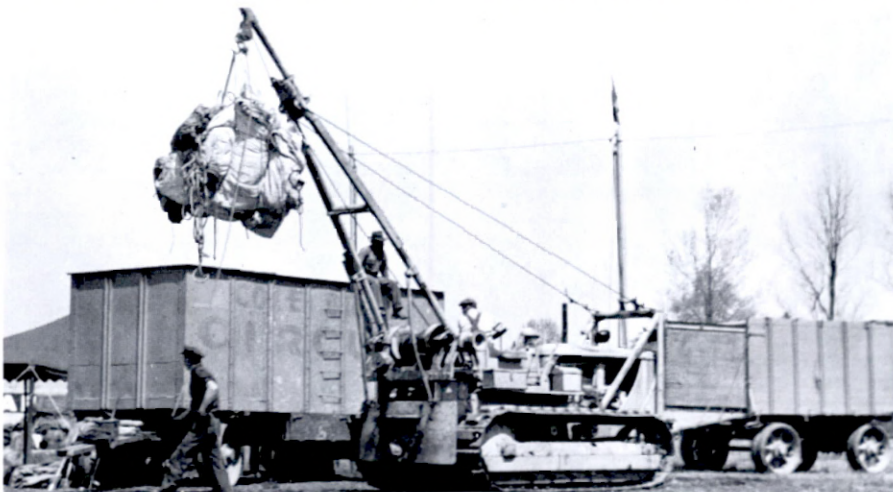
Photographs taken in 1949 reveal a total of only 9 cages which were placed inside the menagerie top. In 1948 there were 10. Missing is the sea lion den. The show was down to a single animal in 1948 so possibly it died during the winter. In any event no sea lion act appeared in the 1949 performance and presumably the cage was left in quarters, or other disposition made of it. Remainder of the caged animals were essentially the same as the previous season.

The 1949 elephant herd numbered 13 and consisted of Big Babe, Carrie, Louie, Jean, Little Jenny, Nellie, Wilma, Tessie, Blanche, Big Jenny, Little Babe, Trilby, and Kate, the same animals that were on the show the previous season.

Remainder of the lead stock was essentially the same as in 1948 although there were fewer ring and baggage stock. Only 7 baggage horses were carried and were used for train unloading and a hitch of six pulled the America steam calliope for downtown bally at stands where it could be arranged.

Some changes were made in the show's

Photo No. 12—Loading canvas in menagerie canvas wagon No. 40 at Cole Bros. Louisville quarters, shortly prior to start of 1949 season. Photo Venice Day.



motorized equipment. Two older Mack trucks were scrapped while the two Mack LJs purchased in 1947 were retained and joined by a newly acquired Chevrolet. The overall number of heavy trucks was reduced from 4 to 3 and according to Bill Rhodes, who lived in Louisville at the time and quite familiar with the Cole motor situation, says the remaining 3 were just not adequate and at many stands the show was forced to hire local drays to haul wagons from the runs to the lot in order to set up on time.

The winter of 1948-49 had been most interesting for the circus world. There were a number of changes in ownership of shows, some new titles, and one brand new circus built from the ground up. In addition to new owners for Cole Bros., the 1948 James M. Cole Circus had been sold to Harold Rumbaugh and retitled for the coming season, John Pawling's Great London. Bailey Bros., owned by Robert "Big Bob" Stevens had been acquired by a new group headed by C.C. Smith and given the new title of Robbins Bros. The Cristiani family had become part owners of Floyd King's King Bros. Circus while one of the truly big circus stories of the winter had been the framing of the brand new Biller Bros. Circus, owned by Art, Bernie, and Hy Sturmack. Biller Bros. had also taken delivery on an entire new fleet of semis built by Kentucky Trailer of Louisville, giving that firm its biggest circus order in its history.

When the 1949 season starting bell sounded there were four railroad circuses ready to roll. These included Ringling-Barnum, 90 cars; Cole Bros., 30 cars; Dailey Bros., 25 cars; and Clyde Beatty, 15 cars. Motorized outfits consisted of Biller Bros., King Bros., Robbins Bros., Mills Bros., Al G. Kelly-Miller Bros., John Pawling's Great London, Hunt Bros., Rogers Bros., Dales Bros., Seal Bros., Stevens Bros., Sparton Bros., Burling Bros., and Kelly-Morris.

As the 1949 season approached, the overall economic condition of the nation was good. Harry Truman was beginning his first full term in office after having completed the remainder of President Roosevelt's term following his death in office back in April 1945. The cold war with the Soviet block was in full force but matters in Europe had simmered somewhat since the tense days of the Berlin blockade the previous year. The situation in the Far East was deteriorating rapidly for the western allies with mainland China almost won over by the Communists. The situation in divided Korea was also extremely tense. While 1948 had been good to most shows some had found the going rougher than in recent years. Although not as yet fully realized by most showmen, the nation was fast entering what has since been called the "Pre Korean War recession". Many circuses would suffer from it before the 1949 season was in the books. However, nothing but pure optimism reigned among the new Cole owners.

For Cole Bros. the 1949 season had come and the show opened with a four day stand in Louisville beginning April 14 and continuing through April 7. A matinee only was scheduled for the final day, Sunday, April 17.

The April 23, 1949 *Billboard* covered the Cole Bros. opening as follows. "COLE DEBUTS IN RAIN, COLD. Evening Draw in

Louisville Okay Despite Weather Break; Variety Program's Keynote, Colleano and Hannefords Top 'Circus' Line-Up in '49 Box.

"Louisville, April 16—Despite bad weather—rain in the afternoon and wintery winds at night—Cole Bros.' 1949 bow here Thursday (14) went off without a serious hitch and the program proved as entertaining and circusy as advance notice said it would. The show winds up its four-day stand here tomorrow with a matinee only and then hits Owensboro, Ky., and its regular route. Business here opening day was better than expected. The matinee house was light but at night it was better than three quarters, the latter surprising in view of the fact that a deluge hit the city about 2:30 p.m. and lasted almost two hours. By 6 p.m. it was cold. Tickets are pegged at \$1.20 and \$2.40 for matinee and \$1.50 and \$2.75 at night.

"Jack Tavlin, general manager of the show; Vander Barquette, the director, and F. Beverly Kelley, director of press and radio, expressed satisfaction with the way the show went off. Outside of the usual opening day bugs, the performances, especially at night, clicked in workmanlike fashion and the night audience proved responsive.

"Tavlin, earlier this season, had announced that the show would emphasize strictly circus routines. The show Thursday lived up to that statement.

Names Lacking

"While the program may lack names, although there are Con Colleano, the Zaccinis, Burt Lancaster and the George Hanneford family (the latter two on for limited engagements), it compensates with variety and plenty of fast-moving displays.

"Unlike previous years, when the show was under the banner of Zack Terrell, there is no spec. Performance gets under way with the show's nine bulls, worked in three rings under the direction of Arky Scott, and from then on it's strictly circus.

"Without doubt the program will lose strength when the Hanneford family moves Sunday to Syracuse to join Frank Wirth's Shrine Show, but this will partially be made up when Dorita Konyot is able to take her place in the program. Her horse is laid up with a foot injury, but the act is expected to join within two weeks.

Colleano Stars

"Con Colleano, recently returned from a successful European tour, has lost none of his ability to warm up an audience. One of the top wire performers, Colleano, with an eye-catching wardrobe, gets the interest of spectators from the start and then bows out to thunderous applause with his forward somersault.

"Lancaster, a former circus trouper but better known as a movie idol, gives a good account of himself as a bar performer. With his old-time circus partner, Nick Cravat, the two trouped with Kay Bros., Lancaster, after a short speech, moved into his act, which on opening night, caused spectators, especially the feds, to emit plenty of oohs and aahs. Apparently they weren't expecting as much circus action from a movie idol.

Hannefords Hit of Show

"The George Hanneford Family, rated one



Photo No. 13—Outdoor billing daub for Cole Bros. stand at Sheridan, Wyo., Sept. 12, 1949. Joe Bradbury Collection.

of the top-notch riding acts in the world, easily was the hit of the show. Almost from the time the five members entered the ring, the audience showed its appreciation with applause that continued throughout the act.

"The show is sans flying acts, but this is hardly noticeable because Director Vander Barquette has put together an iron jaw display, featuring some of the top lookers from his ballet, garbed in colorful wardrobe, and a web number which apparently satisfied the crowd.

"For the most part, the music is circus. Some popular tunes are used during ballet numbers. C.L. Brown, director, and Jackson Kyes, leader and bass drum, have done a good job. Ethel Hermon presides at the calliope.

"Other members of the band are Happy Belisle, drums; Frank Toner and Frank Sullivan, saxes; Larry Ganyard, bass; Joe Fiore, baritone; Roy Landstrom and Bob Hernon, trombones; Joe Rossi, formerly leader of Dailey Bros.' band, trumpet; Don Schneider, Joe Woekner, Clarence Swanger and Phil Doto, cornets.

Bulls in Opener

"Display 1 gets the show off to a fast start, with ballet girls circling the track and doing an oriental dance to appropriate music. Then the nine bulls are brought in, supervised by Arky Scott with Margaret Wise, Sue Staley and Patricia Scott, attired in brief costumes, lending eye appeal. Scott works three bulls in the center ring, with three each worked in Rings 1 and 3.

"Comedy acros took over in Display 2,

Photo No. 14—Cole Bros. advertising car No. 1, season of 1949, was decorated on one side, with painting of the Zachinni cannon act. Pfening Collection.



furnishing plenty of entertainment. The center ring was occupied by four men, dressed as sailors, and billed as the Hilarity Brothers. They are, in reality, four members of the St. Leon Troupe. In the other rings are the Tumbeteys, Donald, Hyman, and Tiny, who also are members of clown alley, and the Donnellys, two men and a gal. All three rings give with fast, peppy routines which rated plenty of mitting.

"Docky's dogs, playing basketball with balloons, are featured in Display 3, with the other rings occupied by pony drills, with Margo presiding in one and Jinx Adams in the other.

"Display 4 is a clown walkaround. Clown specialty numbers have been nixed this year. Costumes and accessories are good and the clowns get good audience reaction, especially from the moppets.

"Preceded by a butterfly ballet, Display 5 is iron jaw, featuring three gals in each ring, one pedaling a bicycle machine while the others perform.

St. Leons Featured

"The St. Leon Troupe is featured alone in Display 6 with a teeterboard. A six-man troupe which appeared last year with Barnes Bros. and has played fairs, the act does its part to support the strong line-up. Their finale is a three high in a chair.

"Jinx Adams, with a 16-horse hitch, racing twice around the track, is featured in Display 7.

"Preceded by a good build-up by announcer Norman Carroll, who, incidentally did a great job opening night despite a poor PA system, Burt Lancaster appears in Display 8. Lancaster intros his partner, Cravat. While the rigging is put up, Lancaster, dressed in a tuxedo, is 'mobbed' by joeys, who form a circle to hide him from the audience. They disperse to reveal Lancaster in white shirt and black tights, ready for his routine. Act is short but snappy and climaxed with Cravat balancing a perch pole



Photo No. 16—Cole Bros. on the lot, season of 1949. Note new canvas for the major tents. Pfening Collection.

on his head, while Lancaster performs a stand atop it.

Web Number Attractive

"The web number is Display 9, featuring 12 gals in attractive costumes working with tuneful music.

"The Hanneford Family takes over in Display 10. Act is loaded with action and comedy.

"Jinx Adams comes back in Display 11, this time with a waltzing horse and clowns follow in Display 12.

"Display 13 features the Ivanov Troupe, casting act, and the Wong Troupe, bar and contortion.

"Con Colleano, like the Hannefords and Lancaster, is given a good build-up by Carroll and he makes a dramatic entrance, garbed in the colorful costume of a toreador. After a bit of cape swinging, Colleano goes to the wire and from there he has his audience in the palm of his hand.

Nelson on Hand

"Paul Nelson, long with the Cole org., is featured in the center ring, with Liberty horses in Display 15. Working the other rings with horses are Margo and Jinx Adams.

"Display 16 technically is an automobile ad, with the joeys using the clown car gag. The gag build-up is heavy with commercials.

"Display 17 features the Skating Lockwells, the Mathis Duo, unicycle and juggling, and Juanita and Her Champions, skaters. The Mathis Duo occupies the center ring and is well received. The two skating acts are good, but the Mathis competition for audience reaction is too keen.

"Acrobatics and contortions feature Display 18, with the Jim Wong Troupe, the Ming Sings and the Tong Brothers the participants. Routines are fast and smooth.

"Jinx Adams and Tony Martin combine in a riding and jumping act in Display 19, followed by the clown walkaround in Display 20.

"The Bruno Zucchini cannon act, featuring Sylvania and Donaldo, winds up the program. Because of the comparatively short distance Sylvania and Donaldo can be thrown, the acts lack the flash when performed in a large arena. However, the folks liked it.

Wants Two-Hour Show

"Tavlin's plan to have the show not run over two hours apparently will materialize. Opening matinee ran slightly over 2½ hours, but the night performance hit 2½ on the nose. When several routines are tightened the show should hit the mark.

"Canvas is all new this year, being purchased from the U.S. Tent & Awning Company, Chicago. Big top is 150 with three 50's, the menagerie an 80 with three 40's, and the Side Show and pad room each 60 with three 20's.

"Cole show this year boasts plenty of lights. Light Engineering was done by Revere Manufacturing Company, Chicago. Big Top, Side Show, and midway lighting is excellent.

"Two new wagons, opening to 55 feet in length, form the Side Show front. Each carries five panel paintings of attractions. Wagons were purchased from the Kentucky Trailer Company, Louisville, and art work was done by General Outdoor Advertising Company. Art work was designed by William Corbet, with Lewis Lossie and Stanley Windhorst doing the paintings.

"The 3,000 metal folding chairs, purchased from Durham Manufacturing Corporation, Muncie, Ind. give the big top 'new look' an extra boost. Equipped with steel saddle-shaped seats 15 inches wide with dual-curved posturized backs, the chairs are finished in black enamel. The chairs can be set up and taken down in short order. Spaced on 17-inch centers, they are fastened in gangs of four by means of double front-leg clamps and heavy channel cross bars across the rear legs.

Spend 20 G on Car

"Finishing touches were put on the show's private car, to be used by Tavlin, McCune and the name performers on the show, who for the first two weeks will be Lancaster. Around \$20,000 was spent to put the car in shape. Interior decorating and furnishings are the ideas of Mrs. Bev Kelley, who was on hand to supervise the work. Car, finished in natural wood, is carpeted throughout and windows are draped.

"Members of clown alley are Lee Virtue, Horace Laird, Jack Krippen, and Lefty Lacelle, all with the org last year under Terrell; Bob Mason, Eddie Dulle, Al Bruce, J.M. Asterson, Danny O'Donnell, and the Tumbeteys, Donard, Hyman and Tiny. (A total of 25 Ballet Girls was also listed.)

Staff

"Jack Tavlin, general manager; Noyelles Burkhart, manager; R.M. Harvey, general agent; Claude M. Russell, treasurer; Robert E. DeLochte, secretary; Joe Haworth, legal adjuster; Vander Barbette, director of program; F. Beverly Kelly, director of press and radio; H.E. Leeman, timekeeper; Dan Dix and Karl Knudson, 24 hour men; Vincent Deady, front door; Fred E. Schortemeier, general counsel; Richard Scatterday, national advertising representative; Fred H. Donovan, chief of police; John M. Staley, steward; Joe Kuta, supt. of big top ushers; Katherine Luckey, wardrobe mistress; William Dwyer, supt. of

trucks; Charles Luckey, supt. of shops; Frank Warner, trainmaster; Frank Casey, supt. of big top canvas; Eugene Scott, supt. of menagerie and trainer of elephants; Marc Rueben and Charley Tavar, supt. of concessions; John McGraw, supt. of ring stock; George (Moe) Takacs, supt. of electrical dept; Don Kidder, supt. of trucks and caterpillars; Frank Wise, supt. of big top tickets; George Churchill, supt. of paint shop, and Louis Rosenberg, supt. of train porters.

Side Show Staff

"Bobby Hasson, manager; Charles Christian, asst. manager and tickets; Bill Hasson, inside manager and inside lecturer; Jimmy Cotton and Joe Palumbo, tickets; Glenn Garad and John Jacobs, front door, and Jack Krotz, sound man.

Side Show Attractions

"Martin Laurello, revolving head; Rex Americo, anatomical wonder; Jose de Leon, armless wonder; William Miller, sword swallower; Joe Newrath, musical midget; Neil Johnson, bag puncher; Ada Mae, snakes; Larry Benner, punch and assistant lecturer; Frisco and Lee, dog and cat novelty; Pat Rahl and Company, mentalist; Capt. Ringman Mach, weight lifter; Joe Carvalho, Duke Kamukua, Jerry Scruggs, Genevieve Wright, Leona Teodora and Sue Carson, Hawaiian troupe, and Pat Simpson, Louise Petite and Ellen Gladway, annex attractions.

Concert

"Tommy Marvin, masked marvel; T.P. Lewis in charge of Wild West concert, with Jacqueline Lewis, Joe Masterson, Edward Swanson, Ace Newton, Dolly Dale and Norma Adams, riders."

The opening elephant number, although not called a spec, was definitely a production type and was advertised as Mandalay in the show's newspaper cuts. From the *Billboard* review it is learned that the show did feature an aftershow with traditional wild west and wrestling numbers. Doubt had been expressed earlier that the show would have one. There is no mention of a pre-show candy pitch so evidently that long time Cole Bros. feature was eliminated.

There is evidence the show cut down considerably on its outdoor billing in 1949. At least one new poster was used, advertising the Zachinni cannon act, but most of the paper had been styles used by the show for a number of years.

As mentioned in the opening review the show had new canvas for all of its major tents. The big top was made of white colored canvas following the 1948 color scheme which had reversed the trend to blue since 1941. Other than the restructured midway with the metal

sideshow bannerlines and concession stands mounted on small wagons the overall appearance of the show on the lot was much the same as in prior years. However, the switch from red colored baggage wagons to orange was obvious and patrons visiting the show could tell it was a "new" Cole Bros. show and that changes had been made since 1948.

The opening Louisville stand produced only fair business, the under par take being blamed on cold and rainy weather which persisted during the time. Following the final Sunday matinee, April 17, the show moved 113 miles over the K&I and L&N railroads to Ownesboro, Ky. where performances were scheduled for Monday, April 18. The route then took Cole into Indiana at Evansville, April 19, where both the weather and attendance was good. Terre Haute, the next day, despite cloudy and cool weather, registered a near capacity matinee crowd and it was full at night. Tragedy hit the show for the first time during the new season at Terre Haute when Charles Hogan, 21, a laborer, was killed when he fell beneath the wheels of one of the show's wagons he was riding. The show next moved into Illinois with initial date at Decatur where there was a three-quarters matinee and full night house.

The April 30, 1949 *Billboard* in commenting on recent Cole stands said that the show had been having railroad troubles of late with late arrivals resulting in several matinees not getting underway until 4 p.m. Other notes said that Eddie Howe was now serving as contracting press agent and that Frederick V. Bowers, former songwriter, was now doing public relations work ahead for Cole Bros. Bowers was working mainly with schools and service clubs where he sings, plays the piano, and gives talks on the circus, in short he was serving as a good will ambassador ahead of the show. Tavlin said he brought Bowers into the Cole organization on recommendation of Waldo Tupper of Ringling-Barnum.

Additional Illinois stands came at Springfield, two days in Peoria, and final date in the state at Hoopeston, April 25. Then it was back into Indiana the next day at LaFayette and the show would remain in the Hoosier state through May 3. The route next carried Cole to Kentucky for two days in Lexington, May 4-5, which was followed by Covington, May 6, then the show moved into Ohio to play Cincinnati, May 7-8, and Middletown the following day.

The May 7, 1949 *Billboard* reported that a number of important personnel changes had taken place recently on Cole Bros. Noyelles Burkhart, manager, had resigned and accepted a position with Ringling-Barnum as assistant to Herbert Duval, veteran legal adjuster. Frank Orman was named as Cole manager to replace Burkhart. Frank Casey, general superintendent, had also departed and was replaced by Jimmy Watts who had been on the Cole show as asst. boss canvasman. Frank (Dutch) Werner, trainmaster, left and Blackie Martin was moved in to serve temporarily in that position. Other bits of information said that the weatherman had been most unkind to Cole Bros. of late but business had been alright despite the rough elements. At Springfield, Ill. there was a good matinee crowd but heavy



Photo No. 17—Cole Bros. midway, season of 1949 showing the four new concession stand wagons built by Kentucky Trailer Co. Pfening Collection.

rains hurt the evening turnout. The two days in Peoria saw excellent business but the stand at Hoopeston, Ill. was a bust. It rained all day in LaFayette, Ind., April 26, but business was termed good considering the weather. In the same issue there was an advertisement in which Bill Oliver, manager of advertising car No. 1, was needing bill posters.

Burt Lancaster and Nick Cravet put on their final performances in Kokomo, Ind., April 27, their two week contract expiring. Tavlin told the press he was on the lookout for other Hollywood film stars to sign for two week engagements. Most of the dates in Indiana were profitable. During the three days in Indianapolis, April 29-May 1 the show got two three-quarters matinees and one light house while all three of the evening shows did well. Columbus, May 2, was good, but the final day in the state, Jeffersonville, May 3, drew only fair business. Bobby Hasson, side-show manager, left that day and joined Red White on the Ringling-Barnum sideshow.

Bill Rhodes said the show had been having trouble with some of the new Kentucky Trailer built wagons so that when Cole played Jeffersonville, which was right across the river from Louisville, they were hauled over to the firm's

Photo No. 20—New seat plank wagon with slatted sides at Cole Bros. Louisville quarters shortly after it was delivered by Kentucky Trailer Co. in 1949. There were two identically built wagons for loading seat planks, Nos. 84 and 92. Pfening Collection.



plant and their wheelbase was shortened.

The two days in Lexington saw big business and fine weather then the show moved into the Cincinnati area and while there the local *Billboard* office sent a reporter to look over the Cole show. His report appeared in the May 14, 1949 issue and was headlined, "CINCY AREA PRODUCES GOOD BIZ FOR COLE 3 DAY STAND." The report went on to say that Cole was the first under canvas organization to play Cincy so far this season and had a healthy gross. Across the river at Covington, Ky., May 6, there was a light matinee but overflow patrons were on the straw in the evening. While setup Saturday and Sunday, May 7-8, on the Carthage Fairgrounds the show registered good matinee houses and full ones at night. Excellent weather prevailed. The stand in the Queen City region was not without problems. There was a delay in the Covington rail yards spotting the train and this caused the matinee to be set back until 3:45 p.m. and while loading the train that evening for the run to Carthage a wagon overturned causing a delay in departure. Elmwood Park police in Cincy objected to the hauling of equipment on streets with steel treaded tractors, claiming it broke up the concrete pavement. This forced the show to load all such tractors on the short lowboy trailers to be moved to the lot and let the trucks do all of the wagon pulling. The *Billboard* reviewer observed that the Cole organization had a fresh appearance with its new canvas, new sideshow bannerline, steel chairs and excellent wardrobe. He noted the big top's seating capacity was 5,500. Grandstand was 13 tiers high. There had been no changes in the program with exception of Burt Lancaster's departure. Dorita Konyot was now working in the performance. A final note said that sideshow prices had been reduced from 35

cents to 25 cents. No replacement for Bobby Hasson as manager of the sideshow had been made. Tavlin said the George Hanneford Troupe had been signed for 1950. A new menage number had been put into the program and directed by Paul Nelson.

In the same issue there was this advertisement. "COLE BROS. CIRCUS WANTS FOR SIDE SHOW. Freaks to feature and novelty acts. Salary no object if you can meet the standards of this circus. No one has left this circus of his own accord. Those who may have left have done so by request or because of incompetency. Wire or write—Jack Tavlin, as per route".

Following the Cincy engagement the show played Middletown, Ohio which proved to be the best spot of the week that was just beginning. Business in the evening was especially strong with some of the audience on the straw. A return to Indiana came next with two stands in the state, Richmond, and Fort Wayne. It was cold in Richmond but the show drew well, however, the take in Fort Wayne was very light. Personnel problems continued for the show as Irish Deedy, front door superintendent, departed at Richmond.

Moving back into Ohio at Lima, May 12, the take was only fair in the afternoon but hefty at night. The next day in Dayton was almost a carbon copy businesswise. Dayton marked the beginning of what would become the so called "billing war with Ringling-Barnum" which would persist off and on for much of the season. The May 21, 1949 *Billboard* noted that Ringling and Cole were in a major advertising confrontation in Dayton. The article said that old time circus methods went back into action when Cole played the city, May 13. Three days earlier, a Ringling billposting car came into town and plastered the best available spots with huge "Wait" posters. Cole had done a minimum of such advertising so the larger show's paper was conspicuous. Ringling was not scheduled to play Dayton until July 30 so this action was considered unusual unless the two shows were set to engage in a real billing

war reminiscent of former days. Cole and Ringling really hadn't been in any kind of close and heated competition since the late summer of 1941 when the bill car boys of both shows got into it so much along the Gulf Coast that both Zack Terrell and John Ringling North had to send out the word to them to cool it. Practically every season since then the two shows would play a number of the same cities, usually in the midwest, but the time span would be of such length that opposition tactics were not used. The fact that now Ringling was going after Cole for a stand which was over two months between playing dates meant things would be different in 1949. Troupers on both shows as well as fans at the time have often referred to the great billing war of 1949. Some say the new Cole owners deliberately set out to challenge Ringling's dominance of the circus world, others say that the larger show purposely set out to put down the new upstart. Much of this talk over the years has been exaggerated and no doubt only those who were privy to the workings of the highest echelons of both shows' management knew what the real intentions of the respective shows were in this matter.

Following Dayton Cole Bros. continued in Ohio for eleven additional stands, including two days in Akron. While in the area it was reported in the trade publications that Joe Brown's band and minstrels were now in the Cole Bros. sideshow.

The May 28, 1949 *Billboard* said that Ohio business for Cole had been below par. At some spots the show was drawing fairly well but overall the gross was below expectations. Despite rain the show drew a full matinee in Springfield, May 14, but had a light house at night. Columbus, which Cole played May 15, was scheduled to see Ringling-Barnum for two days, July 23-24. Zanesville followed Columbus and came through with fine business, including an overflow at night. Newark, May 17, also had a good take. During the stand Con Colleano was put in the hospital with flu but was expected to return in a week. Marion, Ohio, May 18, was a real disappointment with both performances having light attendance. It was observed that throughout Ohio the show was running into plenty of Ringling-Barnum "Wait" paper and newspaper ads. A final note

in the article quoted general agent, R.M. Harvey, that Cole Bros. was headed to California this season for the first time since 1946 and would play Los Angeles and San Francisco.

The June 4, 1949 *Billboard* covered the remainder of the show's tour in Ohio and said that rain, muddy lots, and cold weather continued to plague Cole. Tiffin, May 19, saw two poor houses due to a rain storm breaking just as the matinee opened and continuing on through the night show. The temperature in Mansfield, May 20, skidded to 47 degrees but still a fair sized crowd came out for the matinee and a better one in the evening. Business during the two days in Akron, May 21-22, suffered on account of poor weather. It was chilly the first day and on the second came an all day rain. First day's matinee wasn't much and it was only so-so at night but on the second day in spite of the rain there were two good houses. Ringling heavily "waited" the show for its scheduled two days in the city, July 10-11. Warren, which Cole played May 23, was pretty good but the weather was mean in Youngstown with heavy rains. Two full houses turned up in spite of the wet stuff. Opposition by Ringling for its July 6 stand in Youngstown didn't seem to hurt at this date. Final stand in Ohio came at Canton, May 25. The weather was cool and cloudy but the big top was filled at night.

Cole then moved 88 miles over the Pennsylvania Railroad to play Wheeling, W. Va., May 26, but really didn't leave Ohio as the lot it used was located across the river in Bridgeport. Then it was on to Pennsylvania with first stand coming at New Castle, May 27, to be followed by seven additional dates in the Keystone State. Afterwards would come 14 stands in New York.

The closest opposition date with Ringling-Barnum so far came in Harrisburg, Pa. where Cole was scheduled to play May 30 and the Big Show coming in only eight days later on June 7. The *Billboard* took note of the billing war between the two shows now taking place and said that Cole had challenged Ringling in three

Photo No. 18—New No. 23 cookhouse range wagon on Cole Bros. lot in 1949 was built by Kentucky Trailer Co. Pfening Collection.



Photo No. 19—No. 21 cookhouse boiler wagon was new in 1949. It was built by the show's shops at the Louisville quarters. Pfening Collection.



forecoming stands—Harrisburg, Pa. and two dates in New York, Albany and Elmira. The article said that Ringling had posted much "Wait" paper at all locations. It was also mentioned that Bev Kelly in *The Harrisburg Evening News*, after recounting memorable circus battles of old, had written—"In these less vitriolic days of circus competition, the big shows emphasize principally their own attractions and pay less attention to the alleged shortcomings of their rivals except by implication. But the apparent dismay of the Ringling outfit at discovering a fast stepping crowd big enough to exercise the old fashioned American practice of exhibiting where it chooses has caused the old-timers to put aside their memory albums, get up out of the rocking chair and adjust their spectacles in preparation for a real, old fashioned circus battle for supremacy, the like of which hasn't taken place since the American Circus Corporation fought the Ringlings 30 years ago. In any circus scuffle the pay off comes at the main gate, so interested parties are waiting to see which of the competitors does the biggest business when the big tops go up and the bands start playing."

The June 11, 1949 *Billboard* told the story of the show's trip through Pennsylvania with headlines, "COLE SCORES OKAY BIZ ON PENNSY TREK. Cold Hurts Harrisburg." The article said that Cole Bros.' fast trip through the state had paid off with some good crowds at most spots. Beating Ringling-Barnum to Harrisburg by eight days Cole played to turnaway business at the matinee, May 30, but attracted only an estimated 2,000 for the night show when the temperature hit the low 40's. Meanwhile, Ringling "poo poohed" the "war" with Cole. Gardner Wilson of the Big Show press department in a by-line story in the *Harrisburg Evening News* replied to the earlier article by Bev Kelly. Wilson started off, "Circus war, Haw". He said Ringling isn't paying any attention to such trifles. The *Billboard* writer, however, noted that after Cole left town the Ringling-Barnum ads in the local papers stopped. The Big One's wait paper cluttered the city as well as radio wait spots urging listeners to "wait" until a real circus comes to town. At Sunbury, May 31, Cole got a full matinee but somewhat less at night. Local authorities permitted the America steam calliope to parade on city streets despite an ordinance forbidding it. At Cole's initial stand in Pennsylvania, New Castle, May 27, there was a light matinee but overflow at night. The small crowd in the afternoon was blamed on the rain and the late arrival from Wheeling which delayed start of the matinee until 4:15. The night attendance was said to be the largest for any circus here in 20 years.

In Lewistown, June 1, the show got two three-quarter houses while Huntington the next day saw a light matinee but strong night house. The show next played Johnstown and then moved on 94 miles to Clearfield where a late arrival delayed start of the matinee. Because of the shortness of time to set up, the cookhouse just went into operation out in the open. Two nice houses caught the show on the final date in Pennsylvania. Leaving Clearfield, Cole moved on a Sunday run of 181 miles to Elmira, N.Y. where two shows were given on Monday, June 6. Ringling-Barnum, scheduled



Photo No. 21—New chair wagon with fold out sides on Cole Bros. lot at Louisville quarters 1949. Kentucky Trailer Co. built two identical wagons like this, Nos. 85 and 86. This photo was taken shortly before opening day. Pfening Collection.

to play Elmira on June 30, put its wait paper all over the place. The weather was a little cool on the initial New York date but attendance was pretty good. The weather was again cool the next day in Courtland where the matinee crowd was light but better at night. The advance had put up a good flack in the town where Robbins Bros. had played two weeks earlier. Cole claimed to be the first major circus to play Norwich, June 8, in twenty years but still the matinee crowd was very light and the tent three-quarters filled in the evening.

The *Billboard* said that Ringling's date in Harrisburg, Pa., June 7, after the big fight with Cole, was profitable with the big top being filled at night after a three-quarters house showed up for the matinee. The Big Show's management continued to minimize the Cole competition for the stand and claimed the show had doubled the gate of the smaller circus, claiming Cole Bros. got 7,500 while Ringling exceeded 15,000.

The June 25, 1949 *Billboard* came out with a rather sensational story to effect that it had learned that Frank Orman was now the "No. 1" Boss on the Cole show, replacing Jack Tavlin as the top executive, even though Tavlin

Photo No. 25—Cole Bros. cages in menagerie tent at opening stand in Louisville, 1949. Pfening Collection.



still was traveling with the show and retained his title of general manager. The article went into no further details on the matter but did cover the Cole tour of New York where it was said that night business continues to be strong but matinee attendance has been off. Utica, June 9, supplied two big houses and the next day in Geneva the seats were better than 75 percent filled in the afternoon and it was capacity at night. Auburn, June 11, somewhat reversed the pattern of late with the larger crowd coming at the matinee. Cole played Albany, June 13, and again faced the heated Ringling wait ads for its stand scheduled for June 27. Cole's matinee that day was very light but the big top was full at night. The program was strengthened in Albany when the George Hanneford riding act was signed for three weeks. Final notes said that George Churchill the show's painter with help from several others had recently redecorated the America steam calliope wagon in white and scarlett. The same issue had a report that the new Biller Bros. Circus would sign a contract to use the Louisville fairgrounds for its winterquarters following completion of the season. (This never materialized as Biller Bros. wintered at the fairgrounds in Athens, Ga. when the 1949 season was concluded.)

After experiencing so much cool and rainy weather thus far in the season it finally got hot before Cole's New York tour was finished. Temperatures were in the 90's for five successive days of oppressive heat along the route. Oneida, June 16, gave strong business but the next day in Watertown the hot weather held down the matinee to a small house. Fortunately the weather cooled off by night and the evening show drew capacity. After



Photo No. 22—Cole Bros. new seat plank wagon No. 92 coming down runs, season of 1949. Pfening Collection.

Oswego and Niagara Falls the show played Dunkirk, June 20, for the final stand in the state. The date was most disappointing, the poor take blamed on the oppressive heat. Cole next moved back into Pennsylvania for one final stand, Erie, June 22, where the show did all right but failed to hit the gross of a year ago when it drew two straws. This time the seats were about three-fourths filled in the afternoon with capacity at night. After Erie the show then moved into Ohio for dates at Ashtabula, Lorain, and Sandusky.

The July 2, 1949 *Billboard* carried a heated rebuttal by Jack Tavlin to the earlier article that Frank Orman was now the top man. Tavlin denied that Orman was the "No. 1 Boss." Tavlin advised he was still the show's general manager and remarked, "there is no such thing as a No. 1 boss". Tavlin reminded, that he, himself, had named Orman manager when Noyelles Burkhart left.

The same *Billboard* commented on business being done by the various circuses enroute thus far in the season. Ringling-Barnum was currently in a slump in New England. Biller Bros. was also in New England doing poorly. Mills Bros. was playing some blooper dates in Wisconsin and actually only a few shows were claiming to be doing well. Clyde Beatty Circus in the Pacific northwest claimed its take was good at present and Dailey Bros. reported it was doing well in Alberta. Perhaps the best business of all was being gathered by King Bros. which was having a great tour in Saskatchewan. The pre-Korean War recession was definitely on and business conditions, especially in New England, were in a real slump, something not experienced since the pre-World War II days.

Cole Bros. was now experiencing a real heat wave and the torrid weather began to take its toll at the wagon. It was very hot in Ashtabula and Lorain and at Sandusky, June 25, the elements became threatening early in the afternoon after days of scorching heat and the fear of a storm further held down the matinee crowd. At night it was clear but very hot and humid. The show then moved over the New York Central 195 miles on a Sunday run to South Bend, Ind., where performances were given the following Monday. The stand in South Bend was the best in a week or so with a capacity night crowd following a fine after-

noon turnout. Cole then moved into Illinois for four dates, the first coming at Kankakee, June 28, where strong competition came from a popular local beauty pageant and this cut down the take considerably. Next came Streater, followed by Aurora, June 30, which proved to be a big disappointment. With temperatures in the high 90's the afternoon house was very light and not much better in the evening. July 1 found Cole at Rockford, Ill., then it moved into Iowa at Clinton, returned to Illinois for a Sunday date in Rock Island, and afterwards left that state for good and went back into Iowa for six stands.

In the meantime the show continued to experience personnel turnover and the July 16, 1949 *Billboard* reported that William Olier, manager of advance car No. 1, had quit in a dispute over the show's billing and Tom Gunnels of the brigade had also left. The article said that Oliver had a dispute with show officials over the proper method of billing this season and the same controversy had caused Gunnels to quit. Oliver was replaced by Harry Doran and Gunnels by Mose Hullinger. It was noted that J.E. Haddon was in charge of the No. 2 advertising car. Other items in the report said that the hot weather was continuing to plague the show and that attendance had been light. Rockford, Ill. was the hottest day so far and less than half houses attended both performances. Ottumwa, Iowa had only half houses but in Keokuk even though the matinee take was light there was a full tent at night. Burlington got a small matinee and only a fair night crowd. Iowa City, July 8, was good and Cedar Rapids the final stand in the state before moving into Minnesota was profitable despite intense heat.

While the show was in Iowa rumors spread through the circus world, first, that general agent R.M. Harvey had left, and then that the circus itself had closed. The *Billboard* office contacted Harvey who said he was well aware of the rumors but none were true. He wired, "Cole still on the road. Business isn't terrific, but we are making our dates, day in, day out, and show is currently playing Des Moines". Harvey said one rumor had it that the show had only 75 paid admissions in Keokuk, Iw. so the matinee was called off, but truth was that the stand was a good one. Other notes in the article said that Austin, first of three Minnesota dates, gave okay business, the town being reached by a 203 mile Sunday run over the Milwaukee Railroad.

The same issue had this advertisement,



Photo No. 24—Cole Bros. motorized equipment on the lot, season of 1949. Left to right are No. 2 Chevrolet truck (new in 1949), the two Macks purchased in 1947, two large Caterpillars and two small Fordson tractors. Pfening Collection.

"COLE BROS. CIRCUS WANTS for Side Show. Freaks and Novelty Act. Sword Swallower or any good working act. Musical Harold Smith, answer at once. Wire Charlie Roark as per route."

After other Minnesota stands at Rochester and Mankato the show went back to Iowa at Mason City where a late arrival hurt the matinee attendance but the night crowd was much better. Two days in Des Moines, July 15-16, were good. Leaving the city at 1 a.m. the train covered the 141 miles to Council Bluffs very slowly. First, there was trouble with hot boxes on some of the cars, then the train was stuck behind a very slow moving freight. As a result arrival in Council Bluffs was not until 2 p.m. the next day. Although it was on a Sunday, July 17, two performances had been scheduled, but the tardy arrival made it necessary to cancel the matinee. The night show drew capacity. Three dates in Missouri came next and the July 30, 1949 *Billboard* covered this period stating that at St. Joseph, July 18, despite the continuing hot weather, the show had a marvelous day with near capacity at both performances. Two days in Kansas City, July 19-20, were rather poor with the show getting only one good day's take over the span. Cole officials said the stand was anything but a winner. Opening matinee had only about 1,000 in attendance and just slightly better at night. Next day wasn't much better. Other problems being experienced were a shortage of roustabouts and so bad was the help situation that the show sought to even hire soldiers for the day through the recruiting office in St. Joseph.

The time had now begun for Cole's trek to the West Coast as had been announced earlier in the season. The show first went into Kansas for a single date in Topeka, headed north into Nebraska for three stands which were followed by a return to Iowa for one final date, Sioux City, July 25, and then it was back to Nebraska and westward ho at a rapid clip.

The August 6, 1949 *Billboard* covered the Cole route through this area and said that in Topeka in spite of temperatures hovering around 100 during the day and a light rain at night the matinee saw the tent 75 percent filled

while the evening performance drew capacity. While in Topeka, Floree Galt of the Cole press staff, did a bang up job getting front page publicity in both morning and evening papers on the day of the show. She also arranged a tie-in with a local disc jockey to broadcast from astride an elephant in downtown Topeka. Lincoln, Neb., July 23, had ideal weather for a change and attendance was good at both shows. A switch in the current hot and dry weather the show had experienced for some time came at Fremont, Neb., July 26, when the rains poured and the lot became a quagmire. The bum weather conditions hurt and there were less than half houses at both performances.

Unfortunately, most shows on tour still weren't getting the take they had hoped for in 1949. None were bragging about business. The new John Pawling Great London Circus, owned by Harold Rumbaugh, had found the going so rough the show closed in North Dakota in late July, with a promise to open a smaller unit to play fairs later in the year.

Other Nebraska dates came at Columbus, Grand Island, Kearney, and North Platte. Afterwards came a 262 mile Sunday run over the Union Pacific to Denver, Colo. for three days, Aug. 1-3. Two of the dates in Nebraska saw a return to the billing war with Ringling-Barnum. Cole played Grand Island, July 28, with Ringling scheduled to come in exactly a month later, August 28. North Platte which saw Cole on July 30 would see Ringling on August 29. However, the biggest battle in the current resumption of the billing war took place in Denver where Ringling was scheduled for two days, August 31 and September 1. The Clyde Beatty Circus had already played a three day stand in the Mile High City so circus fans in the Denver area enjoyed a real treat in 1949.

The Aug. 13, 1949 *Billboard* covered Cole's date in Denver. The article said the show was able to get fine patronage in the city despite the billing war. Cole coming in after Clyde Beatty and before Ringling registered well. Wait paper and newspaper ads by the Big Show caused the dailies to break out with stories about the war between the two shows. The Cole press boys put out stories that Ringling was trying to survive the other shows and take over the entire major circus business in the country. Cole's first two matinees produced only fair business but the rest of the performances saw good crowds. Biggest turnout was Tuesday night, August 2, when the top was nearly filled. Weather during the stand was clear. Another interesting item in the article said that Ned Irish, executive VP of Madison Square Garden, was in Denver to catch Cole Bros. and his appearance sparked speculation of the possibility that Cole might replace the Big One in the Garden in 1950 when the present eight year contract expires. Irish was quoted, "The show (Cole) is as good as any circus could be. There are not as many acts as Ringling-Barnum has, probably, but they're just as good."

Departing Denver, Cole played three additional stands in the state, Colorado Springs, a matinee only in Canon City, and Grand Junction, Aug. 6. Next came a 275 mile spectacular scenic Sunday run over the D&R.G. to Salt Lake City, Utah, where two

days were scheduled, Aug. 8-9. This beautiful city which the Prophet and his flock had moulded out of the desert many years before, was again the scene of a battle in the Cole-Ringling war of 1949.

The Aug. 20, 1949 *Billboard* told the story with headlines, "RB-COLE BILLING WAR CONTINUES. Hits Cole in Sale Lake City." The article then said that Salt Lake City which is usually never on more than one circus' route a year has become the scene of a knock down-drag out publicity battle between the advance forces of Cole Bros. which played Aug. 8-9 and Ringling-Barnum scheduled for September 3. More than a week before Cole's appearance Ringling papered the area liberally with all sizes of paper with specially worded date sheets—"Wait for the Big Show, Sept. 3." Cole's newspaper ad on the day before opening was dwarfed when it was nearly doubled in space by Ringling ads with "Wait for the Big Show". Don Lang of the Cole advance requested the advertising dept. of the dailies to refuse Ringling-Barnum copy until after the Cole date and threatened under the state fair trade act to bring a complaint. Lang succeeded in getting a review of the situation from the paper's legal department but the Ringling copy went out as scheduled. The article said that Cole Bros. had other troubles when it came in at the tail end of a record breaking heat wave. The weather was good on show dates but the populace were too poohed to take a chance under the big top. Attendance at both matinees was poor. First night's crowd was somewhat better than three-quarters while the final night show had capacity. The Clyde Beatty Circus had played earlier in the season. Other notes said that Cole did okay at Grand Junction, Colo. with a good matinee and straw house at night. Canon City, Colo. Aug. 5, gave a fine matinee but no night show was scheduled due

to the long run of 275 miles to Grand Junction.

Following Salt Lake City Cole went northward into Idaho to play Pocatello, Aug. 10, and fair business. Then it was into Montana for stands at Dillon, Butte, and a matinee only at Missoula. The now familiar Ringling wait paper went up again at two Montana dates. Cole was in Butte, Aug. 12, to be followed by Ringling, Sept. 5, and played Missoula, Aug. 13, with the larger circus coming in September 6.

Cole scheduled the single performance in Missoula so it could leave early on the 258 mile trip over the Northern Pacific to Spokane where shows were scheduled the next day, Sunday, Aug. 14, and also on Monday, 15th. In the meantime Cole officials had decided to go ahead with the scheduled dates in Washington and Oregon for the next two and a half weeks but to cancel the planned tour of California.

The Aug. 27, 1949 *Billboard* told the story of Cole's routing plans as well as covering the events of the current trip in the Pacific Northwest. The article said that, generally, matinees have been light but evening attendance have been all right. Getting some relief from the excessive heat of the last few weeks was attributed to the stands the show found profitable. The two days in Spokane were pronounced as real winners despite again being "waited" by Ringling-Barnum for its date on Sept. 7. Wenatchee followed Spokane and at Everett, Wash., Aug. 17, Cole had less than a half house at the matinee but near capacity at night. The article advised that Ringling-Barnum would definitely play California dates including Los Angeles and San Francisco but that Cole would not enter the state at all. The Cole Route now called for the show to turn around at Portland and head eastward. It would make dates in Oklahoma, Missouri, and Texas before the season closed. (No dates, however, were played in those states). Actually, Ringling had not planned to play California since the take in that state in 1948 was not too good except in Los Angeles. Rumor was making the rounds of the show world that

Photo No. 23—New sideshow panel wagon No. 60 on Cole Bros. lot in 1949. Note the Kentucky Trailer Co. sign just above the wagon number. Pfening Collection.

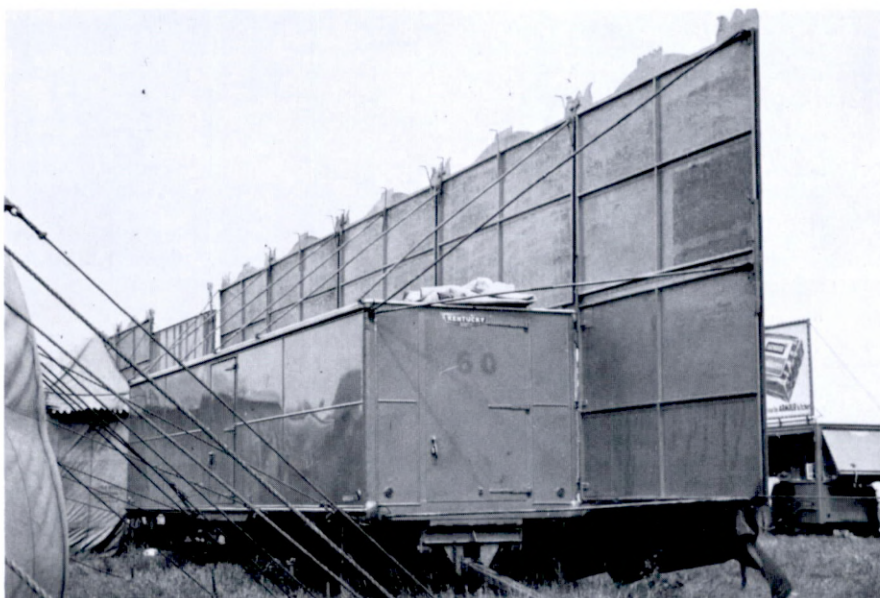




Photo No. 26—Cole Bros. three stock cars at Pratt, Kan., Sept. 25, 1949. Note Pepsi Cola advertising signs. Photo by Jim McRoberts.

Ringling's management had ordered a change in the route to include California in order to smash Cole Bros., however, officials of the Big One denied that was in their plans. Ringling himself had been finding business spotty throughout Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota on account of the hot weather and polio scares in many spots.

Cole played Bellingham, Wash., Aug. 18, then moved on to Seattle for three days, Aug. 19-21. The Sept. 3, 1949 *Billboard* said that Cole's take in Seattle had been good. Ringling-Barnum was due in the city, Sept. 9-11, and the war between the two shows went forward on a large scale in the newspaper advertising. Ringling's Wait ads were larger than Cole's regular ads. The Big Show was on the street cars with its posters and also plastered billboard space around the city with huge wait ads. Don Lang, Cole press agent, took to the radio in an effort to overcome the Ringling waits and in a surprise move announced a cut in admission prices for the stand. No doubt the lower ticket cost helped the Cole wagon. First matinee drew three-quarters with a full house at night and on the second day both performances saw the tent filled. Final matinee had a full house but attendance in the evening was very light. A final note said that Central (Blues) Jenkins was now the Cole big top boss.

For weeks rumors had been running rampant through the circus world that Cole Bros. was in serious financial trouble. It was well known that the season so far had been nothing to brag about. The business recession which had adversely affected practically all shows had been very rough on Cole and the heavy opposition from Ringling-Barnum had further lowered the show's take.

The Sept. 10, 1949 *Billboard* in a major article told of the show's current situation in headlines, "COLE EXEC SHAKEUP NEAR. Two top men give notice. O'Donnell in. Tavlin Seeks New Blood". The story said that a meeting of Cole officials had taken place in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. on August 7. Tavlin, McEuen, McAndrews, and O'Donnell were all there. The report had it that both McEuen and

McAndrews wanted to sell their interests in the show and that Tavlin had been sent out to find fresh money. He was to try and either find two or more buyers to purchase the 50 percent interest held by McEuen and McAndrews or borrow enough to purchase it himself. According to the article each of the four owned 25 percent. The new plan would be for Tavlin and O'Donnell to retain their 25 percent each with 50 percent of the stock open for new investors. Other notes in the story said that Tavlin had requested Zack Terrell to permit a time extension on the \$25,000 payment due August 1 and that Terrell had agreed to it. It was mentioned that the show is not making money at present but that employees have not lost a pay day. Employees took a 15 percent pay cut at request of the management earlier in the season and it has not been restored. Terrell, when questioned by a reporter, replied that he was not interested in getting back into circus business and had no plans to join in the Cole ownership and management. Tavlin announced that the show definitely planned to winter in the new quarters near Miami and that there are big plans for 1950. He said Cole had already signed for that season the Hanneford riding act, Zachinni cannon act, and Con Colleano, tight wire.

The same article said that business for Cole in the Pacific Northwest was reported to be up, especially in Tacoma and Aberdeen, Wash. There were overflows at the matinee and evening performances in both cities. The take in Tacoma, Aug. 22, was especially gratifying since Ringling-Barnum had provided strong opposition for its scheduled stand, Sept. 12. Olympia, Wash., Aug. 24, provided a light matinee, but pretty good night house and

Photo No. 27—Cole Bros. sleeping cars at Pratt, Kan., Sept. 25, 1949. Photo by Jim McRoberts.



Longview, the next day, came through with a three-quarters matinee and straw house at night. Three days in Portland, Ore., Aug. 26-28, saw the last of the Ringling opposition in the territory. Cole got very big business the first two days in Portland but the final day's take fell off considerably. Show officials told a *Billboard* reporter that ticket prices were being cut only in towns scheduled to be played by Ringling-Barnum and where they had used wait ads. The reduced ticket prices were 83 cents for adults, 42 cents for kids for general admission and \$1.20 plus tax for reserves. Regular prices are \$1.50 adults and 60 cents kids for general admission and \$2.75 for reserves. Final note in this most interesting *Billboard* account said that Emmett Sims, who resigned earlier in the season as general agent for Biller Bros., would join Cole at Helena, Mont., Sept. 18, and would work as promotion man in schools and colleges, a special department, and would not be assigned to the regular press staff.

After Portland the show next played the Dallas, Ore., Aug. 29, where only a fair take was gathered. The stand had seen the Clyde Beatty Circus earlier in the season. Cole then returned to Washington at Kennewick, Aug. 30, which also had been played by Clyde Beatty in 1949. It proved to be an excellent stand for Cole Bros. as two near capacity houses came. Next the show made a 143 run over the Northern Pacific to Lewiston, Idaho and the tour of the Pacific Northwest was over.

CHS Michael Sporrer, who was living in Seattle, at the time of the big 1949 Cole-Ringling war recalls that the city was plastered with billing paper and that the Big Show wait sheets could be seen from one end of town to the other. Sporrer's scrap book is filled with the huge Ringling wait ads that appeared in the Seattle press. He also has done considerable research in the newspaper files in stands played by Cole in Washington and Oregon that season, and has provided us with a very interesting short piece that appeared in the *Seattle Times* which told of the difficulties Cole Bros. had with city officials in moving their rolling equipment from the runs to the lot. It read as follows.

"TROUBLES SLOW UP CIRCUS BUT, AS ALWAYS, IT OPENS ON TIME.

"Dan Dix, the Cole Bros. Circus '24 hour man' had troubles on his shoulders Friday morning.

"Dix and the city engineering department found themselves with a difference of opinion as the circus wagons moved along Rainier Ave. from the railroad yards to the show grounds at Charleston St.

"As boss of all Cole Brothers maintenance and construction activities, Dix found it necessary to route his wagons from the freight yards to the grounds as quickly as possible.

"As guardian of the city streets, the engineering department questioned Dix's use of caterpillar tractors on blacktop streets.

"After a sidewalk huddle near the ball park, Dix agreed to load his 'cats' on trailers; the engineers waved the whole caravan ahead and some 500 muscular roustabouts set about putting up the acres of gray canvas.

"Troubles, troubles, troubles, said Dix.

"At 10 a.m. the circus was some two hours

behind schedule; at 11 a.m., some of the lost time had been regained."

A second article also appeared in *Seattle Times* on the same matter. It read:

"SHUCKS, WHAT'S BIG HEADACHE WHEN CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN."

"The circus came to town today and ran into a big, fat headache."

"Equipment was held up for several hours until city officials came to some kind of an agreement on where and how the circus could travel."

"Circus officials said they were halted by city traffic engineers."

"Officials of the traffic engineer's office said the circus was stopped by the police."

"Police said the circus was stopped by the traffic engineer's office."

"Down at Rainier Avenue and Holgate Street, a man in a blue uniform, gold stripes and flashing gold badge paused by three halted caterpillar tractors."

"A Red Tiger, No Less."

"My card!", snapped the man, whipping out an elaborate bit of pasteboard. A red, snarling tiger seemed to leap out from the business card.

"On it, incidental to the tiger, were the words:

"Fred H. Donovan, Chief of Police, Cole Bros. Circus."

"I thought we had permission to use the street," said Chief Donovan. "Now they say the cleats are digging up the street. But look, they have on steel 'street shoes'. They aren't causing any damage."

"Chief Traffic Engineer J.W.A. Bollong couldn't quite see it that way."

"There's a state law which says you can't use these," said Bollong.

A Citizen Telephoned

"A police radio log went something like this: '8:15 o'clock—Tractors stopped in Rainier Avenue, 1700 block."

"9:10—Tractors told to proceed."

"9:15—Told to go ahead."

"9:20—Tractors stopped again."

"9:30—Stalled again at Rainier Avenue and Holgate Street."

"The next report came from Bollong."

"Our assistant maintenance man got a complaint from a citizen who wanted to know why circuses could use equipment banned on our big trucks", said Bollong.

"We got it straightened out, though. The circus got a permit. We just rerouted them over dirt streets."

The Sept. 17, 1949 *Billboard* covered the Cole tour of Idaho in which four stands were played. The article said that the initial date in Lewiston, Aug. 31, gave a light matinee but capacity at night but the following day at Moscow wasn't very good. Hot weather in Coeur d'Alene, Sept. 2, was blamed for the very light business done there. However, the big news in the report said that while the Cole show was going generally poorly in Idaho Jack Tavlin was making headlines by saying the show had offered Al Jolson a salary of \$35,000 per week if he would join Cole Bros. as a star attraction. Jolson would also get use of the private car on the train and would be furnished a Cadillac. The Chicago papers, where Tavlin was when he made the announcement, gave the story a big play, however nothing further was

ever said publically about the Jolson offer. In any event Al never appeared with the show.

On September 1 when Cole Bros. was at Moscow, Idaho, Robbins Bros. Circus was closing its season at Dowagiac, Mich. shortly after returning to the U.S. following three months in Canada. Reportedly, the show had done well in the Dominion but its poor showing back in the states caused the season to be shortened. Robbins Bros. was finished and never again returned to the road. Its equipment and animals were sold piecemeal during the following winter.

The *Billboard* in reporting on circus business in general now that September had appeared on the scene said that Biller Bros. had encountered slim business in Virginia and North Carolina and that King Bros. was finding its take light in North Dakota after a highly successful tour of western Canada.

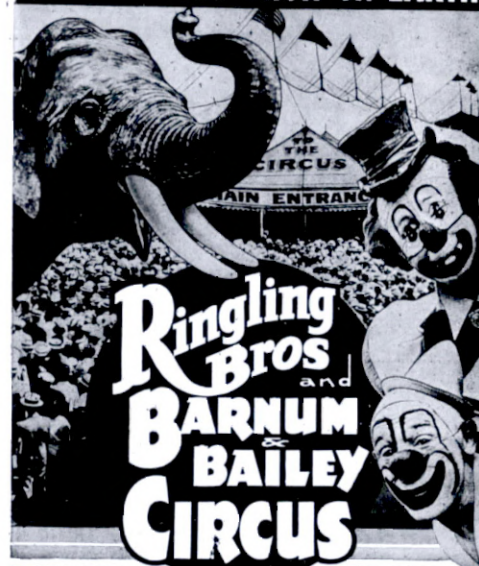
Cole's final date in Idaho was at Sandpoint, Sept. 3, where a matinee only was given due to an upcoming 221 mile run over the Great Northern to Kalispell, Mont. where two shows were scheduled the next day. A total of 8 stands were played in Montana, then the show moved south into Wyoming for a single stand at Sheridan, Sept. 12, then it was on to Nebraska for three dates and Colorado for six. It was rather late in the season to be making stands in this territory and as could be expected some inclement weather was experienced.

The Sept. 24, 1949 *Billboard* said that the show had run into cold weather, including snow at Billings and had been doing just average business in most spots in Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska. Details had it that Havre, Mont., Sept. 6, saw a light matinee crowd and only fair one at night with Great Falls the next day also experiencing a slim matinee but it was near capacity in the evening. Helena, Sept. 8, was a good day with both performances having good turnouts. Cole was on the fairgrounds lot in Bozeman, Sept. 9, and got a good take but cold and rainy weather the next day in Livingston held the crowd in the afternoon to a slim house and it wasn't much better at night. Billings, Mont., Sept. 11, was very poor, attendance and weatherwise. First came the cold rain and later the snow. Also in Billings there was local competition as many citizens elected to take a free tour through an oil refinery. The weather was still cold in Sheridan, Wyo., Sept. 12, but two three-quarter houses still showed up. Due to the long 276 mile run over the Burlington to Crawford, Neb., Sept. 13, only an evening performance was scheduled in the town and it drew a full house. Cole Bros. reportedly was the first large circus to play Crawford in 20 years.

Cole was also the first large circus in Alliance, Neb., Sept. 14, since 1942 and the show hungry natives filled the tent at the matinee and there was a near capacity house at night. The final date in Nebraska at Scottsbluff, Sept. 15, was also a good one. The initial stand in Colorado at Sterling, Sept. 16, although drawing very poorly in the afternoon did see a strong evening turnout. The show next played Fort Morgan and was at Greeley, Sept. 18, when Tavlin and McEuen rejoined after being away on business for some time. Additional Colorado stands came at Fort Collins, Pueblo, and La Junta and then the

WAIT FOR THE BIG SHOW POSITIVELY COMING to
SEATTLE FRI., SEPT. 9 SAT., SEPT. 10 SUN., SEPT. 11
MICHIGAN & 7th AVE. SO.

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH



NOW GREATER THAN EVER!! Produced by **JOHN RINGLING NORTH**

Staged by **JOHN MURRAY ANDERSON**

BIRTHDAYS The **GIRL in the MOON** **SAN FRANCISCO**

OVERWHELMING ABUNDANCE OF ASTOUNDING NEW FEATURES Presented for **THE FIRST TIME IN AMERICA**, including **THE GERALDOS**, Barefooted Aerial Daredevils in Desperate Deeds Aloft;

The New and Greater **ROLA ROLA DUO**, Rolling Globe Sensation; **LILIAN WITTMACK**, Denmark's International Champion Equestrienne; **ALMA PIAIA**, French Falcon of Flight; **MARGAS TRIO**, in Lofly Lunges and Loops; **GUTTY'S GORILLA PARODY**; **FRANKLIN-ASTRID DUO**; **THE BOKARAS**; **GREAT SWANSON**; **DEL MORALS** and Many More of Like Interest!

FRANCIS BRUNN UNUS ALZANAS

Earth's Foremost Equestrian Riders, including the Great **JUSTINO LLOYD**, **TRUPEE**, **BOSTOCKS** and **ZOEPPES**, **CUCICOLA**, Madcap Gentleman; **ACE TROUPE** of Sensational FLYERS; **ANTOINETTE CONCELLLO**, National SOARING STAR of STARS; **LOS ONAS**, Globally Renowned Equestrians; **THE MANDON SISTERS**, **ROMANAS**, **UGOS**, **JOANIDES**, **LOLA DOBRENCH**, **TRISCO**, **ASIA BOYS**, **ROBENIA**, **BIGINOS** and a Multitude of Others!

100 Furiously Funny CLOWNS **WORLD FAMOUS** **MR. AND MRS. GARGANTUA** The Great

World's Largest Traveling MENAGERIE **TWICE DAILY—2:15 & 8:15 P.M.** **BOOKS OPEN AT 1 AND 7 P.M.**

Photo No. 30—Newspaper advertisement for Ringling-Barnum stand at Seattle, Wash., Sept. 9-11, 1949. This was a typical "wait" ad the show used at opposition stands against Cole Bros. The Cole and Ringling-Barnum advertisements printed here appeared in the same edition of the local Seattle newspaper. Ringling's ad was three times larger than Cole's. Michael D. Sporrer Collection.

show headed eastward into Kansas for ten consecutive dates.

The Oct. 8, 1949 *Billboard* came forth with another major article on the Cole Bros. situation. Headlines read: "COLE ORG SHUTTERS OCT. 16. Zack Terrell, Once Owner to Help Reorganize Show in Miami Winterquarters. Route Switch Reportedly Ordered by Eddie McEuen." The piece went on to say that Cole will wind up its turbulent season, Sunday, Oct. 16, in Miami, Fla. and move into its recently purchased winter-quarters preparatory to undergoing a complete reorganization for 1950. Zack Terrell will



Photo No. 28—Unloading Cole Bros. elephants at Lawrence, Kan., Sept. 28, 1949. Photo by Jim McRoberts.

winter with the show helping to reorganize it from top to bottom. Terrell told a reporter, "I promised Eddie McEuen and Roy A. McAndrews (two of the show's main stockholders) that if they bought the winterquarters in Miami I would come to Florida and help them reorganize the show. They definitely have bought the new winterquarters so that means I will be there." The article said that McEuen ordered the show closed a month earlier than originally planned. The route was drastically changed to get it into Miami for a four day stand, Oct. 13-16. The show will play Pittsburgh, Kan., Oct. 1, then make a 300 mile jump to Jonesboro, Ark. for October 3. The show will pass up Joplin, Mo. originally scheduled for Oct. 3 and Tulsa, Okla. scheduled for two days, Oct. 4-5. Terrell, replying to rumors that he will be with the show in 1950, said it would depend on his health. Earlier reports had it that Tavlin was seeking money to buy out McEuen and McAndrews but it now appears that McEuen will stay and requested Terrell to help reorganize the show.

The Oct. 15, 1949 *Billboard* continued with coverage of the Cole route through Kansas and Arkansas and said that the show had stiff competition from a fall festival and football game in Chanute, Kans., Sept. 30, which hurt at the ticket wagon and that competition from a college football game was too tough for the show in Pittsburg, Kan. the next day and it took another belting in its bid for patronage. The long Sunday run over the Frisco Railroad took the show from Pittsburg to Jonesboro, Ark. where on show day, Monday, Oct. 3, two near capacity houses were registered despite an all day rain. The rains had been around for the two previous days and consequently the lot became a mess.

Jonesboro was the only stand in Arkansas and the show next went into Mississippi for dates at Holly Springs and Armory, and then on to Alabama to play Jasper, Oct. 6, and two days in Montgomery, Oct. 7-8. Then came a 376 mile Sunday run over the ACL and Southern railroads to Palatka, Fla. where performances were given on Monday, Oct. 10. The show played Orlando the next day which was followed by West Palm Beach and then Cole moved on to Miami for the final date of the 1949 season, a four day stand, Oct. 13-16.

The Oct. 22, 1949 *Billboard* covered the final Cole stands of the season and said the date in Jasper, Ala., Oct. 6 was a winner with a three-quarters matinee and overflow at night. The evening performance was delayed in starting because of so many standees, who were finally strawed so the show could begin. The two days in Montgomery were a disappointment. Only an evening performance was scheduled the first day following the 157 mile run over the Frisco and L&N railroads. Threatening weather held the crowd to less than a half house. The second day saw a pretty good turnout but the overall engagement was not up to expectations. After

the final performance in Miami, Oct. 16, the show traveled the short 14 miles over the Florida East Coast Railroad to its new quarters in Ojus, Fla. Total mileage for the 1949 season was 14,558.

A silence then descended in the trade publications on Cole Bros. in its Ojus quarters. No mention was made whether or not Terrell went there to help in the show's reorganization. In November there was a rumor that Olsen and Johnson, popular comedy show producers and performers, were dickering for the purchase of Cole Bros. and the *Billboard* contacted Tavlin about it. His answer to the inquiry was reported in the Dec. 3, 1949 issue, "Absolutely no truth to the rumor". A Chicago gossip columnist had first reported that Olsen and Johnson were wanting to purchase the show.

After the 1949 Cole season was over the question was raised in many quarters as to why the season had been so disappointing for the show. In my collection is a letter from the late R.M. Harvey to a well known circus personality in which he blames the failure on inexperienced personnel, however upon closer examination his contention doesn't seem valid. True, there was a rather sizeable turnover of key personnel during the season but all persons in important positions appear to have been experienced and well qualified. Some who left as did Bill Oliver, manager of the advertising car, claimed the advertising policy of the show in 1949 was wrong and that the successful billing procedures used in 1948 and prior seasons should have been continued. Certainly the billing war with Ringling-Barnum hurt and many have expressed opinions that this was perhaps the main cause of Cole's downfall. However, in retrospect, the biggest cause of Cole's failure in 1949 was probably due to the very sharp business recession which adversely affected practically every circus on the road that season. John Ringling North was quoted in later years that 1948 was the last really big season for that show under canvas. In 1949 the Big Show also experienced a sharp downturn from recent seasons. Business activity in general continued in a slump until after the start of the Korean War in June 1950.

Very little activity took place in the Ojus quarters during the remainder of the fall and early winter of 1949. It was a period of waiting. As the year neared the end of its days Tavlin was still on the lookout for new money to revive the Cole show. He, in time, would find it, but not until 1950.

Post Note: There will be two supplements in the future in connection with this series, one covering the Louisville quarters and final disposition of the Cole Bros. equipment left behind when the show departed in the spring of 1949 and the other will cover the Ojus, Fla. quarters which history will show was used by

Cole Bros. only one winter, 1949-50. Both of these supplements will be generously illustrated with photos. The final major installment covering the 1950 season will probably come in the Nov-Dec. 1980 *Bandwagon* and this will be followed with one last supplement covering the Cole Bros. story since then.

COLE BROS. CIRCUS

Train Loading Order in Sioux City, Iowa on July 25, 1949. Listed by Flat Car No., Wagon No., Wagon Contents and Type of Wagon.

FLAT CAR NO. 45: Train loading tractor, Fordson; 82, Menagerie prop and concessions, Van; Train loading tractor, Fordson; 2, Lot layout, Chev. truck van body; 80, Stake and chain, Van

FLAT CAR NO. 35: 100, Light plant for runs, Van (folding sides); 20, Commissary and refrigerator, Van; 21, Cookhouse boiler, Van; 22, Dining tent and equipment, Van; 23, Stove wagon, Van (folding sides)

FLAT CAR NO. 46: Steam calliope, America tab; 42, Menagerie poles, Open van; 40, Menagerie canvas, Open van

FLAT CAR NO. 45: 101, Jacks and stringers, Stake 30'; 102, Jacks and stringers, Stake 30'

FLAT CAR NO. 37: 60, Side show, Van/panel front 33'; 61, Concession stock, marquee, and midway props, Van/panel front 33'

FLAT CAR NO. 36, 3, Water truck, Mack; 88, Big top canvas, Open van 14'; 87, Big top canvas, Open van 14'; 70, Pad room and horse tent, Van

FLAT CAR NO. 48, Tractor, Caterpillar; Big top poles, Stake; Stake Driver, Half van

FLAT CAR NO. 47, Tractor, Caterpillar; 51, Light plant, Van (folding sides); 50, Light plant, Van (folding sides); 52, Light plant, Van (folding sides); 53, Light Dept. props, Van

(Author's Note: Only 3 light dept. wagons appear in the set of loaded flat photos to be run with this article. A fourth would be difficult to load on a single flat with the Caterpillar. Possibly, there was a fourth vehicle at time of this listing.)

FLAT CAR NO. 43: 1, Water truck, Mack; Stake puller and grader tractor, Caterpillar; Dolly for carrying above tractor; Office and gen. adm. tickets, Van; Station wagon (Break point in train for loading and unloading.)

FLAT CAR NO. 38: 17, 3 lions, 1 tiger, Cage; 12, Gnu, Cage; 10, Park & snow deer, leopard, Cage; 8, Mongrel, monkeys, raccoon, Cage; 16, Chimpanzees, Cage

FLAT CAR NO. 42: 14, Hippo, Cage 19'; 9, Deer, kangaroo, Cage; 15, Leopards, Cage; 18, Burros, Cage; Baggage wagon (this may be No. 37)

FLAT CAR NO. 39: Zachinni cannon act, Truck; 72, Wardrobe, Van; 92, Seat planks, Stake

FLAT CAR NO. 41: Concession stand; Van (folding sides); Concession stand, Van (folding sides); Concession stand, Van (folding sides); Concession stand (back yard), Van (folding sides)

FLAT CAR NO. 40: 85, Seat chairs, Van (folding sides); 89, Seats, Van; 84, Seat planks, Stake

FLAT CAR NO. 30: 81, Props, Van; 73, Wardrobe, Van; 75, Props, Van; 52, Props, Van

(Note: If listing is correct there were two No. 52's)

FLAT CAR NO. 49: 86, Seat chairs, Van (folding sides); Reserved seat tickets, Columbia tab; 74, Dogs and props, wardrobe, Van

TRAIN: 16 flat cars, 2 lead stock cars, 1 elephant car, 10 sleepers (one painted white and gold and titled, "Saratoga Springs", 1 advance car. Total—30 railroad cars.

Color scheme for both train and wagons was orange with blue lettering. In addition to title wagons carried words "Here Today."

TENTS: Big top—150 ft. with three 50 ft. middle; menagerie, 80 ft. with four 40's; sideshow 60 ft. with three 20 ft. middles (banner line mounted on two 33' wagons opening to 55' each with 4 panels); Pad room and horse tent, 60 ft. with three 20' middles; dining top, square end with two middle pieces, measurements unknown.

The author of this historical listing is unknown. It is from the collection of CHS Gordon Carver who advises it appeared in the early mimeographed version of the Little Circus Wagon.

AL G. BARNES

THE EARLY YEARS

OF THE TRAINED WILD ANIMAL SHOW

By Chang Reynolds

When requested by Joseph Bradbury to compile information concerning the early years of the Al. G. Barnes' Trained Wild Animal Show, this writer fortunately had material available with which to accomplish the task. During the years that I worked at the Selig Zoo in Los Angeles, I met and discussed with trainers and performers the early activities of Al. G. Barnes. In 1964, with three members of the Joseph Andrew Rowe Tent, there was an interview with Ova and Robert Thornton who were trouping with the Barnes' aggregation in its earliest years. In fact, Bob Thornton was one of the first trainers to play an important role in the development of the show. In addition to this important interview and those conducted earlier, it has been possible, while pursuing other historical interests, to accumulate material which sheds light on that early period of Al. G. Barnes' career. As with most interviews and research one question dominates all others.

The question: How to separate fact from fiction; how does a researcher recognize fantasy and the delightful tale from the event which actually occurred? In presenting this material to *Bandwagon* readers, the author has made every effort to check and re-check the information; to discard that which seems to be inaccurate and to qualify, or to inform the reader of any information that seems to be accurate, but which may be biased. With this in mind, let's take a look at the first efforts of Al. G. Barnes to form a major circus organization.

During those first years at the turn of the century the entertainment record of Al. G. Barnes is shrouded in the mists of the past. George Perkins, well-known clown of the west, first joined the Barnes' show in the years immediately after World War I. He worked in the electrical department and in 1919 sold tickets for the concert for which he was paid five percent. Perkins reported that in the early years Al. G., Dolly Barnes, and Doc Cunningham operated a Magic Lantern Show. Cunningham was a professional of vaudeville and magic shows. He also was an escape artist. During this conversation, Perkins commented that the first "lion" owned by Barnes was a puma and that, at this time, he owned a performing dog named "Barney." The Thornton interview confirmed this fact.

In the late spring of 1905 a note appeared in *Billboard* which stated that, "The Al. G. Barnes Animal Show has just arrived in Abilene, Kansas, from Cuba, where it has been playing with the Circo Pubillions." This brief notice concluded by remarking that the Barnes' Animal Show "would go out with the Parker Amusement Co." Whether this was the first tour with Parker is not known, but for the next few years, Barnes, his trainers and animals would be with C.W. Parker.

George Perkins related that Parker's carnival was called the "White City on Wheels." C.W. Parker had started touring early in the century with a merry-go-round from his base at Abilene, Kansas, and then moved to Leavenworth in the same state. He toured three carnival units from the latter location which later grew to five. In 1906-07 he employed a girl in a ball on a loop-the-loop as a free attraction. At another period during those years he featured an elephant walk on a tight rope as a free attraction to the carnival.

According to Bob Thornton, Parker turned the carnival business over to his son-in-law, Con. T. Kennedy, in 1909. Both of these men, Perkins and Thornton, reported that Al. G. Barnes toured his animal show with the Parker (Kennedy) Carnivals in the years 1905-1909. Martha Florine, a famous trainer of leopards on the Al. G. Barnes' Wild Animal Show, was also with Barnes on the Parker Amusement Co. according to both Perkins and Thornton; this is also confirmed by *Billboard*.

Since Robert Thornton furnished much of the information for these early years, it is necessary at this point to introduce him. Both he and Al. G. Barnes Stonehouse were Canadians. Thornton was "discovered" by Barnes while Bob was working "Fight With Flames" in White City, Chicago. Thornton had been on the P.J. Mundy Animal Show a year earlier and was such a success that Al. G. was aware of the skill he possessed in animal


Barnes used this letterhead for his animal acts prior to the organization of his circus. It is dated 1904.



Al. G. Barnes, The Master Showman.
This photo was taken around 1910. All illustrations are from the Pfening collection.

training. While at White City, Thornton worked two camels. Barnes signed him and also bought the two camels. (Unfortunately none of us present during the interview with Thornton thought to ask the part played by the two camels in the "Fight With Flames" show.)

Thornton's description of the Barnes' show as he first encountered it included one young elephant, RUTH, the two camels, one horse, "Kansas," five ponies (a four pony drill and one pony that did a January act), a dog act (four Fox Terriers costumed as ponies). He did not mention the cats that Martha Florine worked. Al. G. Barnes worked this dog act and

BARNES ANIMAL ACTORS		
MLLE. BARNES and her riding and performing Mountain Lion, NERO Does not require a closed iron arena but performs in an open ring or stage	 <small>AL. G. BARNES</small>	PONIES 4, Very Beautiful Spotted, Black and White Stallions 10 Fast-Working Dogs 4 Large Monks 1 Mountain Lion
BACK SOMERSAULT DOGS HIGH LEAPING HOUNDS HIGH LEAPING COLLIE that turns a complete Front Somersault over objects EXTRA LARGE MONKS—ONE GIANT BABOON in particular stands between 4 and 5 feet high These Animals are Fine Lookers and Fast Willing Workers All Costumes and Stage Trappings Good		



AL. G. BARNES, TRAINED ANIMALS

NERO, THE RIDING LION,
AL. G. BARNES TRAINED PONIES,
SAUL, THE 5 FOOT MAN MONK,
AL. G. BARNES TROUPE OF
EDUCATED DOGS.

PERMANENT ADDRESS,
408 E. 4TH ST. CHESTER, PA.

according to Thornton it was excellent. The canines worked like a regular pony act.

"One day," he related, "just as the act ended, the tail-end dog shook himself and the attached false pony tail fell off. It was a hit. The people really laughed. After that the dog's pony tail was arranged so that it would come off when he shook himself at the end of the act. It always got a laugh."

The 1905 tour of the Barnes' animals with the Parker Amusement Co. has already been indicated. On 2 December of that year, *Billboard* made brief mention that "Barnes' diving elks, which are an outside free show at the Chutes Amusement Park, were drawing big crowds." The Chutes Park was located on Fillmore street, near Turk and Eddy, San Francisco. Many west coast show owners presented animal acts at that location, including, among others, Norris & Rowe.

Barnes returned to the C.W. Parkers shows in 1906 as is indicated by this brief note in *Billboard*, 20 October, p. 32. "The Al. G. Barnes Trained Animal Show (with the Parker Amusement Co.) took top money at the Ak-Sar-Ben carnival at Omaha, Nebraska. The three baby lions with the show are fine little fellows and a great drawing card. Dolly Castle continues to work the African lions and the bears, and does an artistic dance in the den, and closes by feeding raw meat to the animals from her lips."

The above article would indicate that the Barnes' animal show included more animals than Thornton mentioned and also does not state that Martha Florine was with the show. This slight confusion might be accounted for by the recollections of Vance Hill, legal agent for the Pacific Electric Railway and confidant of Barnes after 1911, to the fact that, on occasion, Barnes' brother, Captain Stonehouse, would be in charge of a separate outfit on the carnivals. The brother was also known as Professor Stonehouse. *Billboard*, 1 December 1906, reported that the Al. G. Barnes Animal Show and Zoo opened on the 15th of November in Omaha, Nebraska. "Business was good from the start and great success is predicted for the venture." This note would seem to indicate that the Barnes' show quartered in Omaha during the winter of 1906-07.

This colorful letterhead was used by Al. G. Barnes in 1906. The original in the files of the Circus World Museum was written to William P. Hall on January 26, 1906 and requests lowest price on Hall's largest elephant.

There is no information in this historian's files regarding the activities of the Barnes' show in 1907. In all probability his animal acts were still with the Parker Amusement Co.

In its issue of 5 September 1908, *Billboard* carried an article concerning the Al. G. Barnes Trained Wild Animal Circus. This is the first mention of the word "circus" associated with the Barnes' show that the author has noted. Even in later years, the property was usually referred to as a "trained wild animal show." Excerpts from the September 1908 article include the following information.

"We are now in our fifth successful season and neither presidential campaign nor panicky times has hurt our prospects of making this the banner year. Col. Al. G. Barnes has just

Barnes and his animal show appeared on the Con. T. Kennedy carnival in 1909. This water wagon on the Kennedy shows was taken around 1909.



returned from New York, after an absence of ten days, during which time he purchased two camels, two elephants, three leopards, and two bears, and has placed an order with Luis Ruhe for another consignment, which positively makes this the biggest and best trained wild animal circus on earth. There are over one hundred animals in our collection, and every one of them takes part in our performance. (This is the first reference to the famous slogan used in the Barnes' advertising in later years—"Every Animal An Actor—Every Act An Animal Act.")

To continue with the 1908 *Billboard* review: "One of Col. Barnes' greatest and most successful efforts has been rewarded by obtaining the best lady and gentlemen animal trainers and handlers in the business, some of whom have been in his employ for a long period.

"Following is a partial list: Martha Florine, Millie Howard, Eolis, Mlle. Barnes, Edward Kelly, Chas. Cook and Signora Carlotta, with Carl Newsom in charge of all animals, with four assistants. Jack Pollock, our genial announcer and orator, is making good. He is ably assisted by Roy From. The business is under the personal direction of Mr. Al. G. Barnes, with Jas. A. Morrow in charge, and Mlle. Barnes as treasurer. The show will winter in Seattle, Washington, commencing about Oct. 30, and opens the season early in April, bigger, better and grander than ever."

Another short statement in *Billboard*, 7 November 1908, indicated that the Al. G. Barnes' show closed its touring season at Lewiston, Idaho, on 20 October and immediately shipped to quarters in Portland, Oregon. The article concludes with a reference to "Hip", the somersaulting elephant, who narrowly escaped injury during the last week of the season due to a malfunction of the props. A second sentence refers to the elephant as "RUTH" and, of course, it was that famous pachyderm. This article also stated that James A. Morrow was manager of the show.

Bob Thornton had some comments about the Portland winter quarters as he answered a question about the Barnes' features of lions and tigers riding horses and elephants.

"I had a riding lion," he said. "I had two of

them. That was in 1909. They rode a horse. Where I worked in Portland, on the old fair grounds. I had a small octagonal building and I was there all alone. All the animals didn't work. Al. G. and his wife had the working animals in vaudeville. I had two lions there—well, I had four—one male and one female. And the female had cubs. That's the reason they left her in quarters. There was one horse, named 'Kansas.' The building I was in was too small to put up an arena and I had four sections of steel arena laying on their sides. The arena I built was just the height of the horse's back. So I built some props and I worked the lions on a collar and chain.

"Well, at first I worked 'em loose. I got them so they rode around pretty good on the horse. When I first took them in there, I was trying to figure out how I was going to get the lions and the horse in there and shut the gate at the same time. I got one lion in, the female, and on a seat in the middle of the arena. Then, I turned the horse in and, while I was fastening the door, 'Kansas' wandered over and was smelling the lion. That would happen only once in fifty years.

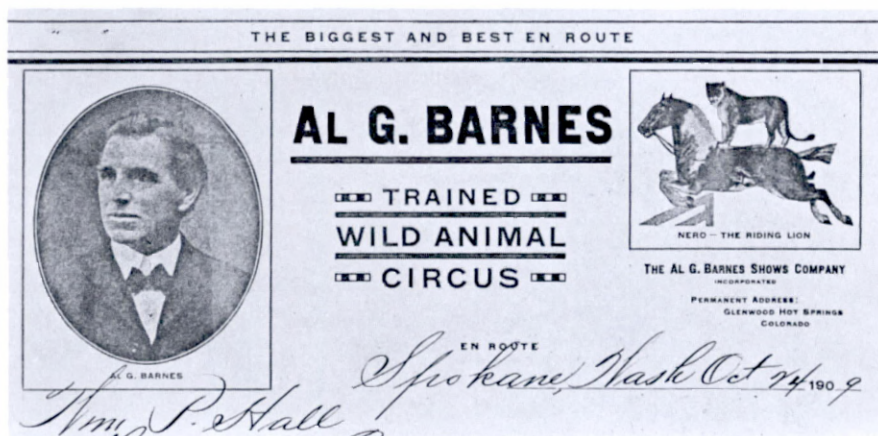
"I finally got both lions working—'Sultan and Sultana' were their names. Then, they got the idea that they didn't want to work. They would ride around on the horse's back and then jump over the arena to the outside. So, I would go outside and bring them back and put a collar and chain on them. They would ride around again and jump out but I'd hang onto the chain and they would hang over the edge of the arena. After two or three days of that they wouldn't jump out any more.

"I got them so that they rode around on the bridge across the pedestal and onto the horse on the other side. Then, I used to put my head in the male's mouth. The male would stretch across two pedestals and I would carry him around on my shoulders. It was a real nice act.

"At that time Al. G. was going to the Con. T. Kennedy Carnival; that's C.W. Parker's son-in-law. They loaded the animals in a box car with the lions at the front end. The male suffocated and I just worked the female afterwards. She worked up until I left the show in 1923. After the male died, she was very nervous. I used to put a pedestal in the arena for her to mount the horse. She didn't need a pedestal. She was so nervous she would dash in and jump directly onto the horse."

According to Thornton, the Al. G. Wild Animal Show was with C.W. Parker in 1908 (and earlier), and Con. T. Kennedy in 1909. However, he did indicate that the winter season was occupied with winter dates in vaudeville.

Billboard, 16 January 1909, reported that the Al. G. Barnes' Indoor Winter Circus was divided into two units with Barnes in charge of one group and James A. Morrow supervising the second unit. Morrow did the booking and railroad scheduling for both shows. Some dates played were Pendleton and Baker City, Oregon; and Walla Walla, Washington. Performers were: Martha Florine, leopards; The Marvelous Beno, gymnast; Eddie Kelly, lions; Charles Cook and "Big Jeff," the boxing kangaroo. Also on the program were the Al. G. Arabian stallions and Mlle. Barnes' riding lion, 'Nero.' The tasks at the front door were



This 1909 Barnes letterhead may have been the first for his circus. This letter also from the Circus World Museum was sent to William P. Hall on October 24, 1909 and asks about buying or leasing 9 or 10 railroad cars.

handled by Mrs. James Morrow. "The show was small then," commented Thornton, "and Charley Cook who finally got to be manager of the show in the twenties, was boxing the kangaroo. He was a fill-in clown at that time."

At first glance, the *Billboard* statement regarding a riding lion with the vaudeville tour seems at variance with Thornton's report for that winter. However, Bob Thornton never said at any time that he trained the first riding lion for Barnes. He mentioned only that he trained the two in quarters that winter.

On 13 February 1909, *Billboard* reported that the Al. G. Barnes' Wild Animal Circus had just completed a two week's engagement at Walla Walla, Washington, to record-breaking business. There were four turnaway houses during the two-week period. Additional information included the statement that "The Barnes' aggregation has been playing auditoriums, rinks, and armories and has not lost a single day since the close of the tenting season in November."

It can be assumed that the performers and acts mentioned with the vaudeville tour also were associated with the Barnes' road tour of 1909. Most of these performers were with the Barnes' show for several years. A few dates for the touring season are listed in the *Billboard* issues for that year. Whether these dates were in conjunction with the Con. T. Kennedy Carnival is not known to this writer. However, since each stand spanned a week, the carnival schedule is indicated. Barnes' opened at Lewiston, Idaho, on April 12. Additional stands for 1909 in the writer's files are: Pendleton, Oregon (April 26-May 1); La Grande, Oregon (May 3-8); Baker, Oregon (May 10-15); Pocatello, Idaho (May 24-29); Logan, Utah (May 31-June 5); Ogden, Utah (June 7-12); Butte, Montana (June 21-26). July and early August stands are missing but the route picks-up with Kamloops, B.C. (August 23-28); Everett, Washington (August 30-September 4); Centralia, Washington (September 6-11); North Yakima, Washington

(September 13-18); and Spokane, Washington (September 20-25).

Eight weeks of this summer tour of 1909 were occupied with a tour of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. During August, Al. G. Barnes, still a Colonel in the *Billboard* account, had ordered four new 16-ft. cages. They were delivered at Everett, Washington. The season closed at Palouse, Washington, on 1 November and the show went into new quarters at Minnehaha Park, formerly a Spokane pleasure resort. This location consisted of four large buildings, an eight-room cottage, and 40-acres of land. A good road and electric cars passed the front gate. The largest building would house the stock. It was built of stone and measured 60 x 150 ft. The cages were placed on one side; elephants were opposite them on the other side, and a 40 x 40 ft. arena was located at the end. The next largest building was a two-story construction used for a sail loft, carpenter shop, blacksmith, and paint shop. A third building housed the baggage stock, camels, ponies and dogs. A fourth structure was used as a ring barn. The cottage was occupied by James A. Morrow who was in charge of the quarters. Another building that the park management had used for an electric fountain and basin was used for the seals of the Barnes' show. Looking forward to the 1910 season, Barnes' planned to use a 120-ft. round top with four 30-ft. pieces. The Annex canvas was a 75-ft. round top with a 50-ft. piece. The dressing tent would be a 65-ft. top. Plans were also made to form a "Monkeyland" display for the uptown wagon. Thornton mentioned that sometimes the show used sea lions for this uptown wagon display.

At this juncture, this account will return to Bob Thornton's activities in 1909. His first reference was to bears—one, the famous wrestling bear of the Barnes' show, "Bill"; the other "Rosie".

"To work bears, you have to handle them," Thornton began. "They muss your clothes up, tear 'em off. Louis Roth, when he first came on the Barnes' show, he had been a lion trainer with Bostock. Al. G. brought him on when I was about the only trainer around there. I was working about nine acts. I had just broken a lion and tiger act—two lions and two tigers. That was in the fall of 1909. Al. G. said, 'What are we going to give Louie to work?'"

"I'd always been trying to get rid of these

bears, so I said, 'Well, give him the bears.' There was one Tibet bear in there that walked a ball on her hind legs. If you didn't watch her she'd fall off the ball on top of you and undress you. So the first time I put Louis in with the bears, I showed what they could do, but I left the Tibet bear out of the group. The Old Man (Al. G.) came in and said, 'Where's Rosie?'

"I said, 'Well, I thought I'd leave her out the first time.'

"Oh," he said, "put her in."

"So I told Louis the next time we'll put the Tibet bear in with the others. Well, Louis pushed the ball up to her on the seat. She just got on the ball, on her hind legs, and began to walk toward him. She got half-way across the arena and came down off the ball and undressed Louis. That was the finish of that."

"Louis said, 'I'm a lion trainer. I don't know nothin' about bears.'"

Thornton commented, "I figured that anyone that could train a lion could train a bear. I trained anything."

At this point, Ova Thornton broke in with this remark, "You didn't know any better."

Bob continued, "To me they were all animals—they were all wild. I broke a wild boar act. That was in 1923."

He also broke a group of peccaries to work in the ring—but that was later and will be related in its proper place.

"Bill" was a Russian brown bear that for many years was featured as a wrestling bear in the Barnes' program. Thornton trained several men to wrestle him over the years. However, the events that he recalled most vividly regarding "Bill" were concerned with film making at Inceville in conjunction with the 101 Ranch Show's Indians and cowboys.

Inceville, located somewhat north of the present center of Santa Monica, was reached by a dirt road over which horse-drawn wagons and buggies traveled. A fishing village, populated by Japanese, lay at the mouth of the canyon. One incident recalled by Thornton involved the bear and the famous star of silent films, Mabel Norman. Also present on location this day, was a male actor who was chased up a tree by the bear in the course of the day's work. A couple of years later "Bill," the Russian wrestling bear, was used at the same site during the filming of a sequence which involved the use of a group of Indians from the 101 Ranch Wild West which was wintering at Venice, California, at the time. Thornton, costumed as an Indian also, wrestled the bear in make-believe hand-to-hand combat during the filming. "Bill," according to Thornton, was not used to men wearing feathers and this became a problem because the bear constantly pursued the Ranch Indians and knocked the headdresses from everybody in sight.

The Ranch Show had signed a contract with the Bison Moving Picture Company to supply cowboys, cowgirls and Indians, horses and additional stock and equipment for the production of western films. These were the films in which Thornton was working "Bill." This interlude has leap-frogged ahead one year to include the stories of "Rose" and "Bill" and now it will resume the Barnes' tale by returning to the spring of 1910.

In January 1910 *Billboard* offered three items concerning Al. G. Barnes and his wild

animals. One item indicated that Barnes had his animals in vaudeville during the winter season—as was usual for his operation. This note from San Francisco indicated that the riding sea lion, "Dick," from the Barnes' show, was a feature at the Pantages Theatre during late December and early January. Captain Stonewall (sic) was in charge of the act. This, of course, would have been Stonehouse, Al. G.'s brother. "It was indeed a novel and wonderful performance," stated *Billboard*.

Also, in this issue of 1 January, it was mentioned that "Al. G. Barnes, proprietor of the Al. G. Barnes' Animal Circus, leaves for the East after the holidays on a business trip. He intends to purchase four more flat cars, and one stock and one sleeper."

Under the title "A SHAKE-DOWN AVERTED," the same issue carried this story: "All showmen acknowledge the long-headedness and quick wits of Uncle C.W. Parker, the man who made street carnivals grow from a half-dozen little 'rag fronts' to 30-car attractions, and it will be interesting to past victims of shake-down lawyers to hear how a 'frame-up' of the attachment class was outwitted by Parker not long ago. It seems that Al. Barnes, the animal man, was running the feature show with the Parker attraction, and one of his lady animal trainers was slightly injured by one of the lions at Topeka during a performance. The show menagerie paid all her expenses, paid her salary while she was laying off, and she went back to work in ten days none the worse for her mishap, loud in her praise of Barnes, and the incident seemed closed in the minds of all concerned. Next season the big Parker attraction was playing a week in Salina, Kansas. Barnes had a big animal show with the company—so large that he borrowed several cages from C.W. Parker to house some of his beasts until he could get mor built. Five large lions occupied three of the cages. All went well 'till the middle of the week, when, behold up stepped two lawyers with the sheriff and a

couple of deputies and served papers on Barnes, suing him for \$10,000 for injuring the lady the year previous, and serving an attachment on all the animals.

"This put Barnes 'up in the air' at once, but there seemed to be no way out of it. Barnes could not put up \$20,000 cash bond, and the sheriff secured horses, hitched them to the cages, and was starting off the lot with them when Uncle C.W. arrived on the scene.

"What is coming off here?" he demanded. Being informed, he said, "Well, take Barnes' animals but don't touch those cages. They are mine."

The sheriff demanded to be shown, which Parker immediately proceeded to do. The sheriff said:

"All right. Leave them in the tent. We will watch them there."

"Oh, no," said Mr. Parker, "you must take the animals out of the cages, as I intend to move my property to Abilene this very afternoon. Get them out right now. I demand my cages. If you hold my property one minute after four this afternoon, I shall sue you on your bond."

The sheriff started to one of the cages, and got close enough to dodge a swift pass made at him by a full-grown, man-eating lion, and sent for the lawyers. Parker demanded his cages immediately, and as no one could unload the lions but the Barnes' men, and there was no place to load them at that, they simply let down after an attempt at compromise. The sheriff informed the legal men that he'd be "daggummed if he would even watch somebody else unload them animals unless he was up a tree."

This writer is well-aware of the different versions of this story, as applied to other circus owners, that have passed down through the years. Where it began is difficult to tell perhaps with Van Amburg. The chief value of the article is the reference to the number of lions that Al. G. had on the carnival, and to the fact that he did not own enough cages of his own, at that time, to house the animals.

On the 26th of February 1910, *Billboard* added additional information concerning what probably should be considered the first great

This early photo of a lady animal trainer was taken on the Barnes show around 1910. The trainer may be Martha Florine.



tour of the Al. G. Barnes' Wild Animal Show. Included in this news item were the following highlights:

"James Morrow, manager of the Al. G. Barnes' Animal Circus, comes forth with announcement that the Barnes' Show has arranged with a noted aviator to give flying exhibitions daily in a bi-plane, as a free attraction, before the opening of the side shows, for the coming season.

"Prof. Al. G. Barnes has returned from an extended eastern trip with four carloads of new property, including the state-room car, "Dad-dle." It is seventy feet long and is a Pullman type.

"Three double striped Royal Bengal tigers that were purchased from Sells-Floto Show have arrived, and trainers are busy breaking them to a new act.

"C.C. Clair, a painter of reputation in the circus world, and three assistants have arrived at quarters and their efforts are beginning to bear fruit.

"E.E. Garner, railroad contractor and general agent, has just returned with contracts covering half of the coming season.

"Wm. Paget, the new trainmaster, and Pat Healey, boss canvasman, are at quarters getting their departments in shape, and will be ready for the opening date, April 18, at Spokane, Washington.

"Miss Martha Florine, leopard trainer; Princess Irene, lion trainer; and Tim Buckley, elephant trainer, are in vaudeville with some of Mr. Barnes' animal acts. They are playing different houses in 'Frisco and will leave for Spokane, March 10, while Capt. Stonewall's sea lions, another of Barnes' acts that is playing Chicago time, will arrive April 10.

"Mlle. Pecon, Eddie Kelly, Eolis and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Roth, animal trainers, are

This 1910 photo shows the Barnes show in Canada. Ben Beno is performing on a wire as a free act. Harold Davidson collection.



expected to arrive from New York City, March 1.

"E.F. Rowland and band of twenty picked musicians, will furnish the big show music."

The above article not only mentions the various trainers associated with the show, but also includes evidence of the location of the several vaudeville acts. It will be noted that the sea lion act with Capt. Stonewall (Stonehouse) in charge had moved from San Francisco to Chicago. Also, of importance, is the evidence that Al. G. Barnes was accumulating railroad cars for 1910.

Bob Thornton verified the *Billboard* report by stating that Tim Buckley was the show's first elephant superintendent and that he arrived for the 1910 season. "He was a good elephant man," reported Thornton, "but he had one bad fault. He was afraid of dogs around the elephants. He always carried a pocket full of rocks. He rode a horse and, when he saw a dog, he'd ride up and start rockin' the dog. In Mojave, one day, the parade was heading back for the lot—it was in 1911 (11 March). Tim Buckley saw a dog and, of course, he started after the dog and began to throw rocks at it. The elephants started after him, and the camels started after the elephants, and the first thing you know everything was running away! The whole parade ran away. Fortunately, they all ran back to the lot except the side show band four-horse team. They ended up in the church yard. The elephants got tangled up in some clothes lines and were rounded up downtown."

This statement brought the interviewers to a question concerning these first elephants. Thornton had this to say in answer:

"The first elephant that Al. G. had was RUTH. He had her when I first went on the show in 1908. Then we got JEWEL and BABE. He got them from Louis Ruhe in New York. They came on in Sheridan, Wyoming. I forget whether it was 1908 or 1909 but Barnes was with a carnival. (The elephants were delivered in 1908). The animal show was on the main street of Sheridan—between some buildings. I unloaded BABE and JEWEL and took them up to the show grounds and drove stakes and tied them up. At that time I was handling the three elephants and two camels. I returned downtown on an errand and a big wind came up. I thought that I had better get back to the show. So, I ran back and found that the elephants and camels had all pulled their stakes. They went out back of the tent where there was a wagon and they were all standing with their heads up against it.

"I always tied the camels to BABE. I'd put a rope around their necks and tie them to the elephant; then they would follow behind. Then, I'd walk along on the sidewalk and the animals would walk on the road or street. When we got to Helena, Montana, a cold wind was blowing and it was snowing some. I took them down to the lot but the Old Man (Al. G.) said, "I think you'd better take those elephants back to the cars."

"They were just small then, and he didn't want them to take cold. So, I took the camels to the train and then I came back to get the elephants. When I got about a block from the lot, the three elephants bolted back. They did that several times, and then it dawned on me

that they wanted the camels. So, I had to go down to the train and get the camels, bring them back to the lot, tie them behind BABE, and then the elephants walked back to the train."

These three elephants—RUTH, JEWEL and BABE—were the mainstays of the Al. G. Barnes' show from this period to the end of its touring days in 1938. Additional, exciting pachyderms were added to the circus but these three grew to be very dependable work and performing elephants. BABE and JEWEL, especially, developed into tall animals that were over 8 feet at the shoulder. According to Thornton, "Those elephants did everything. They played football; they played bowling; they did laundry and the barber shop; and, of course, the head carry. Anything an elephant ever did they did it. In later years, they came up with that one-foot stand and all that kind of stuff. They didn't do that."

The writer believes that the excellence of the Barnes' elephant herd was promoted by the skill of the show's elephant superintendents. According to Thornton's recollections, Sidney Rink followed Tim Buckley as elephant superintendent and that Bill Emery was in charge after Rink's tenure. Emery, who didn't remain with the Barnes' show very long, was followed by Cheerful Gardner who held the post for many seasons. In the 1920's, after Gardner went to the Robinson Show, Red McKay held the job. Rink arrived on the Barnes' show in 1911, according to Bill Woodcock. Later, after Gardner came on, Rink worked the elephants and Cheerful was in charge of the menagerie. Bill Emery was in charge of the elephant acts in 1912 according to most records.

The season of 1910 for the Al. G. Barnes' show was reviewed in *Billboard* on 24 December of that year. It states:

"The Al. G. Barnes Big Three-Ring Wild Animal Circus closed its season at Pleasanton, Cal., on Saturday, November 19, after a tour which began at Spokane, Wash., on April 18 last. The tour was one of the most successful in the history of any show of its character and covered the territory in Washington, Idaho, and Montana around Spokane after which began the long trip through Canada, lasting from the sixth day of June, opening at Fernie, B.C., and closing at New Westminster on Oct. 8. During that period all the important towns in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba were visited, including the Fairs at Calgary, Brandon, Gladstone, Dauphin, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Edmonton, Vernon, Victoria and New Westminster. The Barnes' Show is the first to have ever visited Vancouver Island and was received with open arms at every point of exhibition, both on the island and every place in the Dominion.

"Outside of fair dates, one-day stands were the rule and the show left a most favorable impression with hearty invitations to "come again" at every point on the route. Not a single day was lost by reason of the failure of the railroads to land the show on time or its being in readiness to give a performance during the entire tour; in fact, only one day stand was lost and that was by reason of a down pour of rain which precluded any possibility of giving a performance.

"After leaving Canada all the important towns in Washington and Oregon were visited and all made a most satisfactory showing. California followed with a repetition of the preceding business in spite of the fact that the Barnum and Bailey and the Buffalo Bill Shows had covered the same territory a short time before. In the San Joaquin Valley a number of towns were made that have borne a bad reputation from the showmen's point of view for a number of years, but which more than redeemed themselves by the hearty reception accorded the Barnes' Show. The gratifying part of it was that the rule of the afternoon show being the big show, the night performance always equaled and in many cases surpassed the afternoon business.

"Not a single railroad accident or a serious accident of any nature to either performers, trainers or employees occurred during the tour and the show went into winter quarters in San Francisco with practically the business and working staff intact.

"The staff which conducted the show so successfully were: Al. G. Barnes, proprietor; H.S. Tyler, manager; Harold Bushea, general agent and traffic manager; W.C. Peck, contracting manager; E.L. Davenport, press agent; Max French, boss canvasman; Charles Cook, trainmaster; Prof. Roy Markham, musical director; Dick Smith, boss hostler. The show this season included one advance car and eighteen cars back. For season 1911 twenty-five cars will be used, twenty-three back and two advance cars; also a new 130-ft round top with three 58-ft. middle pieces. At the winter quarters, work is already commenced building several new cages, tableau cars and band wagon, and painters are repainting all the other stuff."

The Buffalo Bill—Pawnee Bill Wild West Show of 1910 came into California from Medford, Oregon, on the 26th of September. It made stands through the San Joaquin Valley during the middle of October during which time the Barnes' show was still in Washington following its Canadian tour.

Barnum & Bailey's Greatest Show On Earth also entered California that year from Medford, Oregon, but it came into the state on the 30th of August, nearly a month earlier than the Wild West outfit. It made essentially the same stands through the San Joaquin Valley and had left the state by the 26th of September. With the Barnes' Show arriving on November 1, circus entertainment was provided for the fans of California during three successive months. That could easily happen in the east or mid-west but was a rather rare occurrence in the far west at this time.

The Al. G. Barnes' Wild Animal Circus had booked additional stands in California in 1910—Bakersfield, San Fernando, and Los Angeles (8 days)—but these were eliminated after the abrupt closing of the show at Pleasanton on 19 November. From Pleasanton the circus moved to quarters on a lot on Van Ness Avenue and Grove Street in San Francisco. It had been the site of the former Van Ness Theatre. At this location there was plenty of room for training purposes. All the acts were playing different vaudeville theatres and in the Mission district, Barnes established a zoo during the carnival festival which was held

there. The painters went to work immediately on the job of repainting the entire outfit and contracts were placed for new cages and wagons.

The route for 1910 was as follows: Spokane, Washington, 30 April (opening stand); Moscow, Idaho (31 May-1 June); Colfax, Idaho (June 2-June 4); Fernie, British Columbia, June 6; Cranbrook, B.C. (13 June-15); and Caledonia, B.C. (16 June-18). The show then moved into Lethbridge, Alberta, for 20-25 June. Carden and Raymond, Alberta followed on 27-28 June. Calgary, Alberta, was next with a stand from 29 June to 7 July. One-day stands at Gleichen and Bessano, both Alberta preceded the Medicine Hat date of 11 July-13 July. Maple Creek, Sask., was a two-day stand on 14-15 July. Swift Current came next on 16 July. Moose Jaw, Sask., was another long stand with dates from 18 July to the 23rd. Brandon, Manitoba followed and was played from the 25th of July through the 29th. Minnedosa, Manitoba, was the date for 30 July. Weepana, Gladstone, Dauphin (two days), all in Manitoba and Corona Wadena, Saskatchewan, occupied the first week of August.

Three full weeks in Saskatchewan were played during the middle of August 1910. The second week opened at Humboldt and Saskatoon followed for four days. The week ended with the Hanley stand. Week two included the stands at Rosthern, Prince Albert (three days), North Battleford, and Lloydminster. The third week began at Vermillion, and the show finished out the week at Edmonton. At the end of the month (August 29-31) the Barnes' showed played Wetaskin, Sigemich, and Cambose, all in Alberta.

Most of the stands in September have not been located. However, it is known that the show was in Lacombe, Alberta, on the 1st. This date was followed with engagements at Sator, Stettly, and Red Deer. The next September dates begin with its Victoria, British Columbia, stand on the 26th of the month. Intervening dates are missing. The show remained in

Sidney Rink, the only black head elephant trainer in circus history joined the Barnes show in 1911. He is pictured here in a 1914 photo. C. Beerntsen collection.



Wild animal trainer Louis Roth joined the Al. G. Barnes Circus in 1909 and remained for many years.

Victoria until 1 October (inclusive).

The New Westminster, B.C., week of entertainment began on 3 October and lasted through the 8th. Bellingham, in northern Washington, was played on the 9th. The show was in Summas, Washington, from about the 11th through the 13th. It has been located at Puyallup on the 17th, and at Aberdeen, Monticello, Chehallis, Kelso, and South Bend, all in Washington, from the 17th through the 22nd. The month of October closed with stands at Vancouver, Washington, on the 24th and 25th; Corvallis, Oregon, on the 26th; Cottage Grove, Roseburg, and Grant's Pass (all three towns in Oregon) on the 27th, 28th, and 29th. The show moved to Ashland, Oregon for the 31st.

The first California stand was at Weed on 1 November. It was followed with dates at



Capt. Albert Stonehouse, brother of Al. G. Barnes presented a sea lion act on the Barnes show for a number of years.

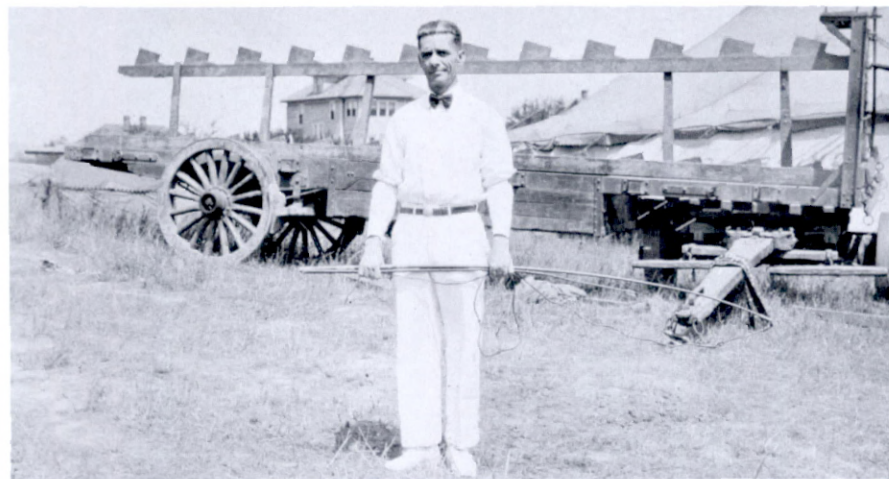
Kennett, Red Bluff, Marysville and Woodland. The show moved into Sacramento on the 7th. Next came the run through the San Joaquin Valley and the early closing at Pleasanton. These dates were: Modesto, Turlock, Fresno (2 days), Hanford, Coalinga, Lamoore, Visalia, Porterville, and Pleasanton. As indicated above, the rest of the route was blown when the show moved to San Francisco quarters.

Now, let's return to the interview with Bob Thornton for further discussion of events concerning the early days of the Al. G. Barnes' show. Some of these will be related to conclude this article.

Thornton was asked a question regarding Louis Roth and the number of lions worked by this trainer.

"Oh, I don't know exactly," remarked Thornton, "but he had 16 or 18 lions in the act at one time. Male and female lions. Now, when he first came on I had that lion and tiger act.

Bob Thornton is pictured in 1928 on the John Robinson Circus.



There were two lions and two tigers. Al. G. gave them to his wife to work. She didn't know enough about it to keep 'em separated. They got to fighting so we finally took the lions out and put them into Louis' act and added more tigers to make a tiger act. That was about 1911 or 1912 when Mabel Stark came on.

"I had one puma that used to ride a pony. That was his (Al. G. Barnes) first riding lion. He used to advertise it as a riding lion, but it was a puma riding a pony. When I first went on the show, he had a riding lion act then. I think it was four lions and a big black bear. The Old Man worked them. One trick he did then—he put the lion on a couple of pedestals in the front of the arena and stood on the lion's back. And the bear walked up and he gave it a piece of sugar. One day the bear got Al. G. by the hand and pulled him off of the lion and got after the Old Man. One of the lions took after the bear and saved the Old Man. That was a big bear—the biggest black bear I think I ever saw. I guess that was the only reason he had it—because it was so big. Anything out of the ordinary, you know, he'd buy it. He had a horse one time—you'd hear him talk about 21 hands high. Boy, this horse was. He was the biggest I ever saw. Of course, he advertised him as from the Al. G. Ranch in California. He just walked it around the track with a pony, the smallest pony.

"One time he had an ocelot. It didn't work either. He carried it around the track in his arms shouting, 'Baby tiger. Baby tiger.'

This answer to our question brought forth another query regarding the use of jaguars in the performing acts on the Barnes' show.

"No," answered Thornton, "he never had any jaguars. Before I went with the Barnes' show, on the P.J. Mundy Animal Show, a woman worked leopards and jaguars. She was a French woman. It was in Luna Park, Coney Island. She worked them with a long lunge whip—it was like a horse whip. She wore long train dresses. The back of the arena was wood. When we first opened there we brought on a fellow from Europe, an artist, to paint the back ground. Well, he painted the amphitheatre in Rome where they tied the Christians to the stakes and turned the lions in on 'em. He painted the lions so real that when we turned the real lions in there they looked like a couple of dogs. He had to paint the lions out. They left the Christians there but painted the lions out.

"Bostock had an animal show out on Surf Avenue. The Ferrari brothers had an animal show. They were all trying to outdo one another. Bostock went in behind where they brought the lions to the tunnel to the arena. He had a guy scratch him all up. Then they turned the lions loose in the arena; then brought Bostock out. Of course, the press wanted to look Bostock over. He got a doctor to put in some deeper scratches.

"P.J. Mundy had been telling what a good trainer he was to the press. He had a leopard on a collar and chain. He clipped its claws and cut its long teeth. He was going to show the press how good he was as a trainer. Then, of course, the leopard ran up the arena bars and he pulled it down. When it came down the claws came down his face. He only had one eye. When they cut the leopard's claws they left them ragged and they sure messed up his face.

"The Ferrari shows—you never hear anything about them. There were two brothers, Joe and Francis Ferrari. They had a carnival."

"Jack Bonavita was Bostock's big animal trainer. He had about forty lions. Of course, all they did was bring them into the arena. They brought them into the arena and they took seats. It was a pyramid. Bonavita knelt down in front of them and then they ran 'em out. By the time they got them on the seats and got them out again it was an act. He ended up here in Selig Park in Los Angeles. A polar bear tore his arm off.

Returning to events which occurred during the early years of the Al. G. Barnes' show, Thornton mentioned Eddie Kelly who has been listed earlier with Barnes' personnel.

"The Old Man had a lion act. This was in the fall of 1909. They had a little guy named Eddie Kelly, that worked with the lions. Pantages wanted a lion act with a woman working it. That was when the Old Man wintered in Spokane. So, they dressed Eddie Kelly up as a woman. Eddie always had a big chew of tobacco in his mouth. The Old Man sent me along with him. I'd set the act and look Eddie over before he went into the arena and make him take his chew out. We showed 'Frisco, Seattle and went on to Vancouver from Seattle. Then Harley Tyler came on. He was the 'fixer' for the show at that time. He says, 'You go back to quarters and I'll take care of Eddie.'

"I went back to quarters. That was when the Old Man introduced me to bears. He told me there were some bears for sale in Chicago—Tibet and Russian brown bears. He wanted to know if they were any good or not. I said that they were supposed to be good workers. So he sent and got 'em.

"There was a big German fellow on there, an animal trainer that had been with the Wallace Show. He eventually went down to Mexico, with a Mexican show. When I went back to Spokane, the Old Man took me out to quarters to show me the bears. There were two Tibet bears and two Russian brown bears. He asked me if I could do anything with them. I said that I didn't know but would try. I asked him what became of the big German trainer and he said that the bears run him off.

"I guess I broke fifty kitchen chairs on 'em before I could get close to 'em. Boy, they'd

come charging. I finally got so I could handle 'em. I kept 'em on a long chain—about 16 or 18 feet long. Whoever had ahold of the chain was all right. Anybody else they would run him. I finally hired a big guy that was working on props. He used to take one in each hand and take 'em down swimming. With me, they used to take off just like I had a cow by the tail."

A question brought on a discussion of the Portland, Oregon, quarters. Thornton's eyes glinted with joyful memories as he said, "This little building I had in Portland. I had a lion, one sealion, and a male and female lion with cubs, and these two lions that I had trained to ride the horse (Sultan and Sultana), and outside I had some goats, and these wolves, coyotes and bobcats. I kept them outside and built a pen for 'em. They smell to high. The odor smelled—oh, so awful. When we shipped in the two bobcats, they came separate. Well, they must have been two males, because when I put them together, all I saw was a bunch of fur going around. They finally separated and I got one in each corner. They never would come out of the corner. I used to shove their food and water into 'em. They'd eat and drink right there and never move."

"I had a cross cut cage with some Rhees monkeys in a pen. One of 'em had one eye. And, I had a big lion about a year old—between nine months and a year old. I slept in the building. This young lion I kept chained to the foot of my bed. At night he would get up on the foot of the bed and sleep on my feet. One night, I pulled the covers up. He pulled 'em down. I pulled 'em up. He bit me on the foot and after that I kept him chained so he couldn't get on the bed."

"The routine every morning in that building was that I'd clean up. The only way to clean the monkey cage out was to open the back door. I tried to fill it with my body and clean it out at the same time. There were three or four monkeys in there. The one-eyed one would get out every morning. He'd duck past me. I had two dogs, a fox terrier and a bulldog, and this young lion. I'd get up on top of the cages and run the monkey off of there. Then, if he went under the cages, the dogs would run him out. He'd run around the room until he'd go by the lion and the lion would reach out and put his foot on him. The monk would just look up and wait for me to come down and get him."

"And those two dogs and that lion, I used to open the door and let them out. I never gave it a thought that there might be a hole in the fence and that they would get out and go down the street. They'd be gone for hours. When they got tired they'd come back. Finally, I went out one morning and the lion tried to get in with the goat so I had to chain him up."

The talk switched to the various times the Barnes' show had been struck by high winds and suffered a blow-down. Thornton recalled many of them. "There were so many blow-downs, that I don't remember any one particularly," he said but he did report several exciting events that occurred in the high wind and torrential rain. From that point he gave a description of the usual layout when the circus was in its infancy.

"When the show was smaller they used to tie everything out to the guy lines. they had a leopard, goats, bears and used to tie 'em all



around the show. They had a high wind one time and out in back the goats were tied to the stakes. Well, the stakes pulled and the top was going up and down and when it did the goats went up and down with it. They'd go up and yell 'Whaaa!' People on the back seats all left."

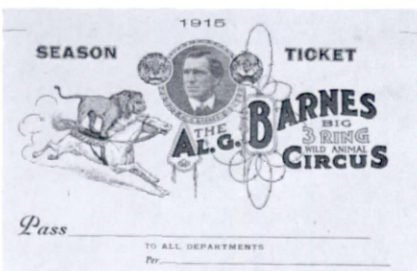
"When the show was small, they had the menagerie in the big top in the back. It wasn't canvassed off. Instead of seats in the back they had the cages."

Don Francis, well-known historian of west coast shows, recalls seeing the Barnes' show at Jackson, Michigan, in 1911. He notes that there was no menagerie as a separate top. The cages and lead stock were in the back (short) side of the big top. "We could see all the animals while sitting in the seats," he said, "and also see them moved to the arena for the next act. There was a section of the chutes that went up over a small wagon that was on a swivel, so it could be turned to the different cages. Back in those years part of the Barnes' advertising

This 1910 photo shows the two prima donnas on the Barnes show, Virginia Earle and Lottie LeClair.



stated that it was a wild animal show with clowns."



Thornton recalled the clowns on the early Barnes' tenting tours. One, by the name of "Snowball" rode a pig down the track. He sat up there on the pig's back, wearing white-rimmed glasses and reading a paper as the hog dashed down the track squealing loudly. When the pig got to the end, it would stop abruptly and the clown would fly over its head. Then, there was Sidney Rink and Andy. Bob couldn't remember Andy's last name "but," he said, "Sidney Rink and Andy were the two best bucking mule riders I've ever seen. They were real. They wore a horse-shoe nail with the point down. They used a mule that was black and undershot. When they put their hand on that mule's back, the mule would kick a mile-a-minute. They wore frock-tail coats and the mule would kick their frock-tail coats up. Just at the right time they would turn a somersault and run. The mule would run after them. They would stop just outside the ring and the mule would grab them by the pants. They never did get on the mule. All they had to do was put their hand on his rump and the mule would just stand there and kick. It was the best I ever saw."

This was not the end of the visit with Bob Thornton. He added many more anecdotes and items of circus history that fine day on 9 May 1964. Events not included here relate to later years with Al. G. Barnes; his tour with the John Robinson Circus; and items with the Jimmie Woods' shows. The writer wishes to thank George Perkins for the information he has provided and Don Francis for the items he located. A word of appreciation is extended to Bob MacDougall, Doug Lyon, and the late Gordon Borders who were instrumental in organizing and taping the interview with Bob and Ova Thornton.

"THIS WAY PLEASE"

By Warren H. Wood

How does one become addicted to circus life without being born into a traditional circus family? Perhaps I can thank my Mother for the lure of the sawdust trail which beckoned to me at a very young age. We lived in Jersey City at the time and Mother would take my hand and we would cross the mighty Hudson River each spring to witness the "Greatest Show On Earth". So with each passing visit my mind was fully made up to one day becoming a part of this different world. Years passed through childhood and on into my teens. Every available circus that came within my reach was visited. Up at dawn to watch Sparks roll into town. A bus trip to Newark, N.J. to see Sells Floto and usually working for a free pass. Sometimes I would take my box camera and wait in suspense for a glimpse of the recorded print. Not being satisfied with that alone I would remove all the posters available in vacant store windows.

During my final year in high school I met a young fellow who was born in Russia by the name of Saul Pomerantz. We both obtained jobs as ushers at the Fox theatre in Hackensack, N.J. Saul now becomes part and parcel of this road to Ringling.

Sometime during 1933 I left the family home at Englewood, N.J. and set out for the midwest to seek fame and fortune. However just prior to that excursion I worked at Benson's Wild Animal Farm in Nashua, N.H. where Franz Woska, Charlie Barry and Margaret Thompson were employed. Margaret had been married to Dutch Ricardo and was later the wife of Egypt Bill Thompson. This triangle induced me to leave Bensons as they could foresee no future for a young squirt buried in the hills of New Hampshire. So then a friend of mine through correspondence in Monona, Iowa with similar interests in a circus career invited me out to his Dad's farm. We bought a Model A Ford truck with an enclosed body, made a few cages and bought a few small animals including an ocelot, African porcupine, a horned rattle snake, rhesus monkey, alligator and a pickled double bodied pig. With this array we joined the R.L. Atterbury show in Garden City, Mo. Times were bad with bank closures and general depression hovering all about. So we left the Atterbury show and took



Warren H. Wood, the author, is pictured in front of a baggage wagon while the Ringling-Barnum Circus was playing Ft. Worth, Texas, in 1934. Author's collection.

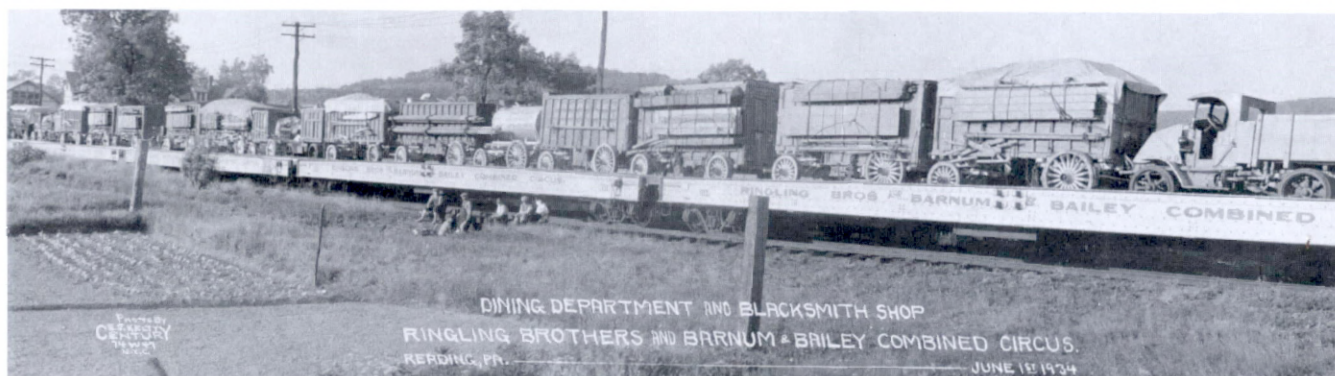
over the side show on the Freckles Hoo Ray Circus in Springfield, Mo. This was a classic example of jumping from the frying pan into the fire. The show floundered for about a week and our bank roll with it. A friendly roustabout suggested I try connecting with Ringling Barnum where the cook house served three squares a day and even had fresh flowers placed on the performers tables. Not only that, they paid off every week like clock work.

So after selling the truck and the few animals, Jo and I went our separate ways. In the interim George Roberts of Philadelphia, Pa. owner of Pamahasika's Pets offered me free room and board which I accepted readily as eating regularly appealed more to me at that period than elusive cash promises. Beside my journey would bring me back east where conditions might be somewhat better. Pamahasika's Pets headed for Wildwood, N.J.

This view of four loaded flats was taken by Kelty on June 1, 1934, in Reading, Pa. The wagons are actually on a second row of flats, in back of the unloaded ones. Pfening Collection.

a seashore resort and showed at Tom Hassan's board walk side show. Bobby Hassan his son became side show manager for Ringling some time after World War II. Once again bad business forced Roberts to cancel out. He rented an empty theatre on the board walk and presented a full show. It was a first class offering with a pick out pony, trained dogs and monkeys and a great cockatoo bird set. So once again the economic forces resulted in Roberts' decision to return to Philly.

Having kept up a sporadic contact with Saul Pomerantz, I learned by a letter from him that he made the usher department with Ringling and was doing just fine. So I wrote and told him he could contact me at my home in Englewood, N.J. and if there was a possible opening to let me know. A week dragged by and nothing happened. Then on Saturday morning I received a telegram from Saul. The show would Sunday in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and play the date on Monday—have an opening for you—Saul. On Monday, June 11th, I sailed up the Hudson River on the Day Line and was introduced to Al Tucker one of the two assistant chief ushers. Tucker said to Saul that he hadn't promised anyone a job but after looking me over decided to give me a try out. Bobby Worth was chief and Bill Sykes his other assistant. I was told to bunk with Saul in Atlanta car #94 third section. So toting my





keester along the track to Atlanta I finally encountered Tommy Barstow the car porter. He told me to unpack and showed me the upper bunk where Saul and I would sleep. He then took my keester and put it in the possum belly under the coach. As I learned later on the usher's cars were the only cars boasting an upper and lower in the working class. Props and big top crew were all three high. Tommy the porter then straightened me out on sleeping car protocol. He said Mike Carey the show painter bunked under Saul and I and could be a little crusty with two first of Mays. Also Tommy let it be known that he sold beer and coffee as a convenience only. A tip was also suggested, the going rate fifty cents per week payable in advance. He then showed me where the doniker was for nothing.

Before I forget, the weekly pay was \$10.75

Edward J. Kelly photographed the entire personnel of the Ringling-Barnum show in New Haven, Conn., on June 13, 1934, a few days after the author joined the show. Pfening Collection.

and a \$2.00 per week hold back payable in a lump sum if you finished the season. The ushers ate in the short end of the cook house with the performers, executive staff, band, ticket sellers and side show. Here again the tipping system was in force. 25 cents per week for the coffee boy and 50 cents for the waiter

The Giraffe-necked women from Burma were featured in the big show during the 1934 season. They are shown here about to enter the big top for the spec. Joe Heiser photo.



with all the seconds you wanted. The show carried a bus and a barber shop motorized and privately operated. The barbers were reluctant to tipping the waiters, so one morning instead of receiving hot coffee, bacon and eggs and pancakes they were served with a platter of mashed potatoes with crushed ice on top.

Saul and I were dubbed the Jersey twins and Bill Sykes became my mentor and the blues or general admission my battle ground.

The usher department was solely responsible for unloading the reserved seat chair wagons and carrying four folded chairs in each hand and setting them up as soon as the bibles were set in place on the stringers. If I can recall correctly there were 22½ sections of reserves and 324 seats in each section. Between shows we would remove the chairs from the top row and carry them to the bottom. Sweeping the top row to the one below and lifting the chairs up to the row just swept. This enabled us to work our way to the bottom without any great effort. Our house keeping finished we were at leisure until doors opened for the night show. As work goes around the circus I would say the usher department were the spoiled brats on the Big One. We were routed out of the coaches as soon as our section rolled in. Getting to the lot and depending on the distance encompassed riding on top of baggage wagons where you were constantly being switched by low hanging branches and very uncomfortable in wet weather, plus the danger of jumping on the wagon pole while the wagon was in motion and climbing up the ladder. Sometimes we would take a taxi and fill as many bodies in as the clown bit emerging from a car in the center ring. The show bus was scheduled more for the convenience of the kingers on the 4th section. Sometimes we rated a lot within walking distance but not very often. I think it was

Providence, R.I. where the cook house was about one mile from the lot. On arrival on the lot we waited for the chair wagons and could make the cook house if the flag was up. After setting up we were free until doors for the matinee. I can only remember gillying the chairs off the lot on one occasion at Wichita Falls, Texas. The show's swing through New England brought many straw houses and forced patrons to sit on the foot planks attached to the general admission seats.

ALBANY MON. 25
Afternoon and Night JUNE
Old Fair Grounds, Albany-1934

RINGLING BROS AND BARNUM & BAILEY COMBINED CIRCUS



The Greatest Show on Earth

ALL NEW

THIS YEAR and
FAR BIGGER
THAN EVER
1000 Astounding
International
Features including

THE TERRIFIC
NEW SENSATION

BY THE GREAT
HUGO IN WHICH
TWO LIVING PER-
SONS ARE FIRED IN
THE SAME INSTANT
FROM A MONSTER
REPEATING CANNON

1600 PEOPLE—
800 ARENIC
STARS—150
CLOWNS—1009
MENAGERIE
ANIMALS—700
HORSES—5
HERDS OF ELE-
PHANTS—7 RINGS & STAGES—HUGE
HIPPODROME COURSE—WORLD'S
LARGEST TENT—4 TRAINS OF DOUBLE-
LENGTH STEEL R. R. CARS LOADED
WITH WONDERS FROM EVERY LAND

Twice Daily - 2 & 8 P. M. POPULAR
DOORS OPEN 1 & 7 P. M. PRICES

The Zacchini double cannon act was first presented during the 1934 Ringling-Barnum season. Pfening Collection.

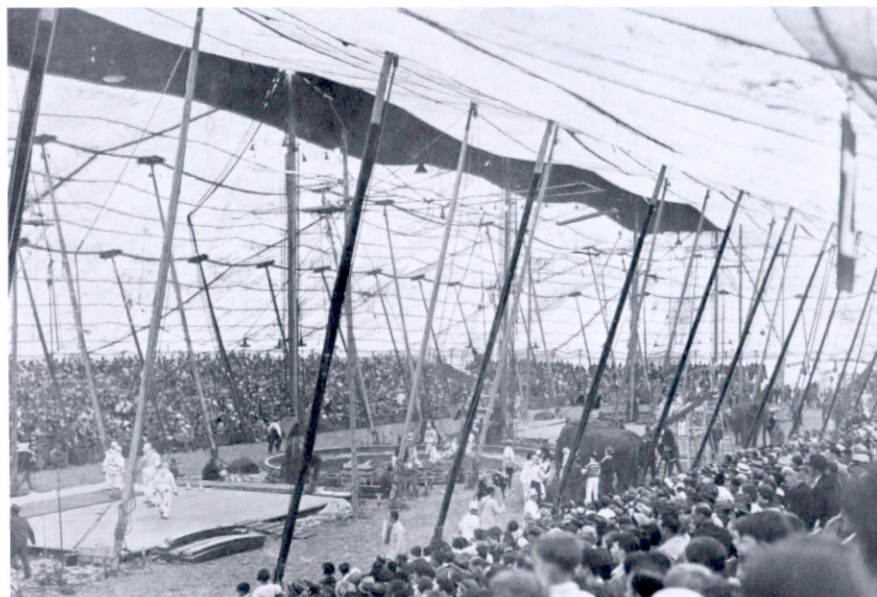
One afternoon Bobby Worth told me to go usher over in the reserved seat section. Each section had a gate man and an usher who escorted the patrons to their seats. The gate man soon informed me that we were working in a gravy spot. As the people trudged along the hippodrome track toward the rear end of the tent's general admission seats the gate man would intercept a likely looking prospect, usually a family with several children and diplomatically ask to see their ticket stubs. He would then point out the obvious disadvantages of sitting in blues as well as the advantage of sitting in the reserved section. Then he would clinch the deal by saying he could provide family seats for half price because he



This wooden red grandstand ticket wagon shown in 1934 was retired a season or so later. Pfening Collection.

had some empty seats available. The happy family would be turned over to the usher who had to juggle the seating so that no beef occurred with regular reserved seat ticket holders. It was usually up to the judgment of the gate man to determine how many surplus seats he could fill. Sometimes we got in a jam where we would have to put extra seats in the aisle. Then the ticket sellers had favorite gate men who they would work with. The gate men would hold out on some stubs and pass them back to the ticket seller who would resell them. Although the show naturally frowned on this practice I believe 90% of the ticket sellers and ushers were involved. The only punishment for any usher caught was banishment to the blues, and that was rough as very little money exchanged hands there, although some customers were propositioned there and routed back to the reserves. Only one gate man had the misfortune to be fired on the spot, he

The massive arena of the six pole big top of the Greatest Show on Earth was the activity area for the author during the 1934 season. Pfening Collection.




tried to proposition Mrs. Charlie Ringling.

Al Tucker the one assistant usher never asked for a kickback but ran a punch board deal and more or less expected his boys to keep the pot boiling. Bobby Worth never asked for anything although we all chipped in one time for a hotel bill he couldn't pay as he was a heavy gambler. Bill Sykes was one of the untouchables, just being satisfied with his weekly stipend. Cy Compton's after show was another lucrative field. Concert tickets went for a quarter and were sold right after the first concert announcement and through the remainder of the main show performance. All ticket holders were allowed to sit in the reserved seats. One ticket seller and one usher for each two rows of seats. Starting from the back end of the tent the usher preceded the seller. The usher picked up any odd change for any one not having a ticket as well as the tickets for those holding them. The seller snared all the greenbacks or even money. Underground money was a way of life. The commissary wagon and paymaster was a loan shark charging a dollar for a dollar per week for money borrowed. Big top jigs would buy a carton of cigarettes against their checks and sell them for cash at half price. Some of the more affluent ushers would pay 50 cents a day to one of Jimmy Whelan's big top gang to sweep his

section. Each gate man had a small foot stool to sit on during the show. At tear down one usher would gather all the stools and carry them to the stake and chain wagon. Here he was obliged to turn the chairs over to the loader and give the man a 25 cent tip.

The band top where ticket sellers, ushers and Merle Evans band members dressed were expected to tip John Lock the custodian at least 50 cents a week. As most ticket sellers and ushers spent Sundays in the best hotels in town and living high on the hog made for these economic adjustments as the tipping just about covered the weekly pay check. Some of the musicians used to turn their shirts inside out to save on laundry bills.

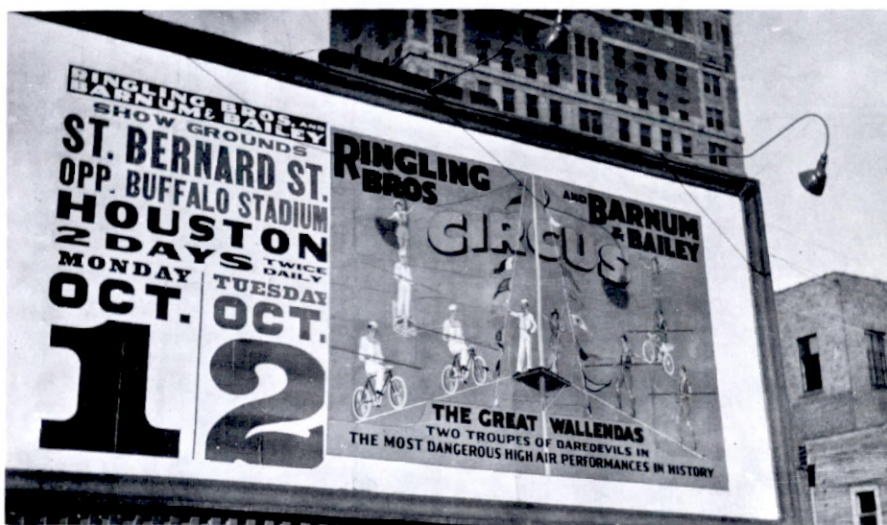
The 1934 season was plagued with a typhoid epidemic which has been thoroughly covered in *Bandwagon*. However I recall one incident of a strange nature concerning an usher who was hired en route. He came off the Floto show and so we nick named him Floto. He was a happy go lucky sort of person and enjoyed playing the harmonica at the drop of a hat. Another usher Harry Lownds dubbed Fanny because of a past affiliation with Fanny Brice as a piano accompanist came into the band top while Floto was soloing on the harmonica. Fanny literally grabbed the instrument out of Floto's mouth and admonished him for playing the harmonica under canvas. Certain death was sure to strike someone present in the top. Floto sheepishly pocketed the instrument and we all stared at Fanny's outburst. I am sorry to say that Floto died within a week of typhoid fever.

<div> <div>  </div> <div> SEASON 1934 No. 2 OFFICIAL ROUTE ALLOW MAIL ENOUGH TIME TO REACH POINTS NAMED BEFORE DATE GIVEN </div> </div>					
DATE	TOWN	STATE	H. R.	MILES	
May 21 to May 26	PHILADELPHIA	Pennsylvania	PENN	93	
May 28	SUNDAY				
May 29	Newark	New Jersey	PENN	90	
May 30	Jersey City	Penn	14		
May 31	Easton	Pennsylvania	E.V.	77	
June 1	Reading	CRB or N.J. Reading	52		
June 2	Lancaster	Reading	42		
June 4	SUNDAY				
June 5	Harrisburg	Pennsylvania	PENN	35	
June 6	Williamsport		98		
June 7	Elmira	New York	79		
June 8	Watkinsburg	Pennsylvania	D.L.A.W	27	
June 9	Scranton	Pennsylvania	D.R.H	116	
June 11	SUNDAY				
June 12	Poughkeepsie	New York	Y&B DE VAREE	121	
June 13	New Haven	Connecticut	S.Y.N.H & H	86	
June 14	Hartford			37	
June 15	Waterbury			32	
June 16	Stamford			52	
June 17	Bridgewater			25	
Total Miles to date				2207	

We made the California trip in '34 and the living statue numbers were dropped in Indianapolis, Ind. Santa Barbara was an unusual stand. A late arrival at 5 p.m. had the lot swarming with people. Breakfast was served in the cook house followed by lunch and then supper before doors opened at 8 p.m. Our first glimpse of a Hollywood celebrity came with Warner Oland or better known as Charlie Chan. Los Angeles provided us with Buck Jones, Wallace Beery and John Boles. An amusing incident occurred in the band top one day when I walked in. I spotted two fellows donning oriental spec costumes. As I sat down and started to change into my own uniform I called John Lock the custodian over and asked



This is the barber shop bus, where the non-tipping barbers plied their trade.



The Great Wallendas were featured in this billboard for the Oct. 1 and 2, 1934 stand in Houston, Texas.

him if he recognized the two gentlemen dressing in the corner, he said "no". Then I informed him it was none other than Chester Morris and Robert Montgomery. He said he never heard of them and that I had better keep an eye on my wallet. Ben Turpin sat in my section and right behind a quarter pole. I asked him if he would like to move. He declined saying his eyes were so directed that he could see on either side of the pole. We also had a madam who escorted all her girls to a matinee and passed out calling cards also saying that as she brought a lot of business to the show she would appreciate a visit from us in return.

The season wound up in Jacksonville, Fla. Saul Pomerantz, Mark Johnson and myself headed for New York. Mark's sister Fanny had been married to Frank McClosky and his other sister to Paul Arley. Most of the boys heading north rode a train while we three decided on a boat trip and relaxation. So for eighteen dollars each we took the S.S. Algonquin with meals thrown in for free. So ended the '34 season. It began up the Hudson River and finished by return on the Atlantic Ocean.

**1980 CHS
CONVENTION
JULY 5,6,7
BARABOO,
WIS.**

SAM W. GUMPERTZ

Samuel W. Gumpertz was born in Washington, D. C. in 1870, at the age of six his family moved to San Francisco. When young Sam attained the age of nine his tendency towards the amusement business became apparent with his debut as a juvenile singer.

In 1890 Sam Gumpertz became advance agent of the Col-Hopkins Vaudeville Show during the winter, returning to the Buffalo Bill Show or the Barnum & Bailey Show in the summer.

He then turned his efforts towards amusement parks, and in 1904 he built Mannion Park, Forest Hills Highlands, Delmont Gardens and Suburban Park all in St. Louis, Mo. Shortly following this he became associated with Senator William Reynolds and built Dreamland Park at Coney Island, N. Y. and became its general manager until it was destroyed by fire in 1911.

Samuel W. Gumpertz then formed a syndicate and bought property at Coney Island and Brighton Beach, N. Y. He continued this enterprise until 1932, at which time he became general manager of the Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus. Mr. Gumpertz still retains his real estate interests at Coney Island.



Child acrobat, Texas cowboy, Buffalo Bill rough rider, actor, theatrical agent, manager and producer, managing director and owner of Dreamland Park, Coney Island, real estate magnate and general manager of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Circus—that is the career of Sam W. Gumpertz of Sarasota.

Plenty of color and glamour there. Born in Washington, D. C., Sam joined the Jackley family of acrobats at the age of nine as a top-mounter, thus taking upon his wiry young shoulders almost all the hazards of the troupe. Within a few months he was seriously hurt, and returned to school. However, at twelve, little Sam Gumpertz was featured in child roles with the stock company at the old Tivoli Opera House, Sutter and Stockton streets, San Francisco, where, at the time, George Marion, the well known stage and screen actor, did Italian monologues. Three years as a

nummer and Sam headed for Texas—riding down to Texas to become a cowboy.

But a fifteen year old boy sometimes finds his dreams difficult of fulfillment, so young Gumpertz compromised by becoming a sheep ranch herder near Sweetwater, Texas. However, Sam had his eye on the chaps and the lariat, and, within six months, he became a rider for Jim Cooksey and Jeff Clayton, old-time cattlemen with a vast ranch in the Sweetwater territory. Sam was in turn tenderfoot, rookie line rider, tophand and foreman, with a wild bunch of hard riding cowpunchers under his command. Then the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show came to Abilene, and, when it pulled out after its exhibitions, Sam Gumpertz was on its rolls as a star among the buckaroos of all nations who made up its famed Congress of Rough Riders of the World.

One day the Buffalo Bill Show played day and date with Ringling Brothers' circus in an Ohio city. Sam looked the great circus over carefully and dreamed another dream. "I'd like to be riding boss of a show like this," he mused. During the following season with the Buffalo Bill outfit, Sam visited the Barnum & Bailey circus. He dreamed another dream. He would give his silver spurs and saddle to run that huge circus. Thirty-odd years later he was to run both shows—Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey combined—but who could have believed it then?

In 1889, Sam worked for Colonel John D. Hopkins, manager of the Cook Opera House in Rochester, New York. In 1890 the opera house burned and Gumpertz went on the road with the Boston Howard Atheneum Stars Specialty company as advance agent. Col. Hopkins was manager of the troupe. In 1892, Colonel Hopkins organized the Hopkins Trans-Oceanic Star Specialty Company, with young Gumpertz ahead as advance man and press agent. These are winter jobs, of course, and during the summers Sam returned to the Buffalo Bill show—but not as a rider. He had now become a staff executive. He had allied himself with the business end of show enterprises. Later, through Col. Hopkins' friendship with James A. Bailey, of the Barnum & Bailey circus, Sam joined the business staff of that great circus.

He now was ready to wring a fortune from show business, and he assist-

ed in the building of the Suburban Gardens in St. Louis in 1894. He was its manager for a number of years. In 1896 he had four summer gardens in St. Louis—Mannion Park, shrine of the drama and vaudeville, with Hughey Ford as his stage manager and Hughey's wife, Jessie Izett, as his leading woman; Forest Park Highlands, with vaudeville; Delmar Gardens, with musical extravaganza, and another. In Delmar Gardens, Mr. Gumpertz engaged E. E. Rice as orchestra and Henry E. Dixey played Adonis on the opening program. In 1893, Sam became half-owner and manager of the Imperial theatre in St. Louis, presenting drama and vaudeville, with a famous stock company resident. On its roster were such names as Minnie Seligman, Minnie Radcliffe, Victoria Bateman, William Redmon, Beaumont Smith, Frank Losee, Marian Elmore, Coulter Brinker.

In 1895, Sam Gumpertz had charge of the largest minstrel show ever organized in America, with end men such as these—Lew Dockstader, Willis Sweatmen, George Wilson, George Thatcher, Tom Lewis, Tom Sulley, Carroll James and Montgomery and Stone. This was at Suburban Gardens, St. Louis. The following season there he essayed Shakespearean productions, with Marie Wainwright as his leading lady and with such notables of the stage as Henry Jewett, Lawrence Hanley, Gretchen Lyons and Elinor Broadfoot (who is now Madame De Cissneros of grand opera) in his company. In 1899, Mr. Gumpertz took over the management of the seventeen Hopkins theatres, a dramatic and vaudeville circuit. He continued there until Senator Reynolds asked him to help build Dreamland Park at Coney Island, N. Y., which opened with Sam Gumpertz as managing director May 4, 1904. It was destroyed by fire in 1911 but Gumpertz and Wm. M. Greve of New York formed a syndicate and bought the property, which they rebuilt and they still own. While operating Dreamland Park, Mr. Gumpertz scoured the world for new and startling features, visiting every country on the globe.

Samuel Gumpertz has brought more strange people to America than any other man. Some of his Dreamland Park importations were 202 Bontoc head hunters from Luzon Island in the Philippines; 125 Somalis from British East Africa and 19 wild men from Borneo. More recently he imported the sensational giraffe-neck women from Burma for The Greatest Show on Earth.

THE DRAFT HORSE WAS KING ON THE CIRCUS LOT



Famous Circus 8-Horse Driver

Frank "Dutch" Warner—25 years handling the heavy horses of Big Circuses—recognized as top 8-Horse driver—handled best long-line teams of Sells Floto, John Robinson, Hagenbeck-Wallace, Cole Bros., Al G. Barnes, Ringling Barnum Circuses in peak period of circus horses. The two heavy Percheron Wheelers were power for the best 8-horse team of Cole Bros. Circus, 1936-37, named "Hans" and "Fritz" (near)—wt. over a ton a piece—purchased for the Circus by Missouri horse dealer and buyer, Jack Morris—this was the finest circus team ever according to Warner. His special skill as a long-line driver, especially in the crowded 50 or 60 chain team horses working on heavy bogged wagons on muddy lots, Dutch could get more out of his team under difficult conditions than most drivers ever could!

A series of Heavy Horse Art drawn by J.P. Booker to be released in prints never before available to horse admirers. Now you can own this series of beautiful detail pencil sketches. Breathtaking in depicting the nostalgic era of the Great Heavy Horse. This art is printed on 100 lb. white vellum stock, suitable for framing for the most discriminating collector. The crispness of the shaded detail pencil work is amazing.

Print #1—Dutch Warner "Famous Circus 8-Horse Driver"

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Show Ring Corporation of America, Suite 116, 1670 S. Amphlett Blvd., San Mateo, California 94402.

Chappie Fox, V.P. Ringling-Barnum Circus, 3/12/80—"No one can draw Draft Horses like you, Jerry. You make a Percheron like a Percheron—not just a Drafter. Your art is superb."



The Heavy Horse Art of J.P. Booker

"My interest in draft horses was early—my father, a horse-drawn field artillery colonel in the U.S. Regular Army, was recognized as top authority and field expert in the efficient use of draft horses.

He was impressed with the circus use in efficiency and systems for comparable use of Army's field artillery problems. As a small boy I accompanied him on his constant visits and tours of the circus to study in detail all the serious parts of the circus daily struggle—particularly with horses.

I sketched, carved and observed the work of the great drivers, boss hostlers and horses of this department of the circus to become best knowledgeable of their role.

My serious works of art started with detailed sketches of heavy harness horses. From this to advertising, art and design and all types of animals, then always back to the Draft Horse."



CLYDE BEATTY CISCO-KID HISTORIC POSTER ART

The design of a bust of both Clyde Beatty and Duncan Renaldo, with equal billing for both stars, was finally agreed upon. Each star was silhouetted in a background of the trademark of the role he featured in the circus.

Bill Moore convinced Clyde that Duncan Renaldo's top billboard magazine TV ratings were the correct credentials to give him the western star attraction for the circus.

Of the Cisco-Kid series in many movies and TV, O'Henry's Caballero of fiction was the first Cisco Kid. As a cowboy hero, the Cisco Kid was around in various versions even longer than the Lone Ranger, and Duncan Renaldo was the best as far as the ratings were concerned. He began in the movie business in 1923. Renaldo had flashy horses all named "Diablo," and "Diablo the 1st" was shown with Cisco in the circus. At one time there were five horses for him in the TV series.

The TV show ended for Renaldo in 1955 and he was available for Beatty. It seemed the right choice—but the expense of the Cisco Kid and the serious problems of the disastrous 1956 season served its toll on the Clyde Beatty Circus.

Print #2—Clyde Beatty Poster Series
"Clyde Beatty—Cisco Kid"

Each print of the original is hand-signed and numbered by the artist in a limited edition at \$7.50 per print; on 100 lb. stock; size 25" x 19". California residents add 6% sales tax. Send check or money order to:

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